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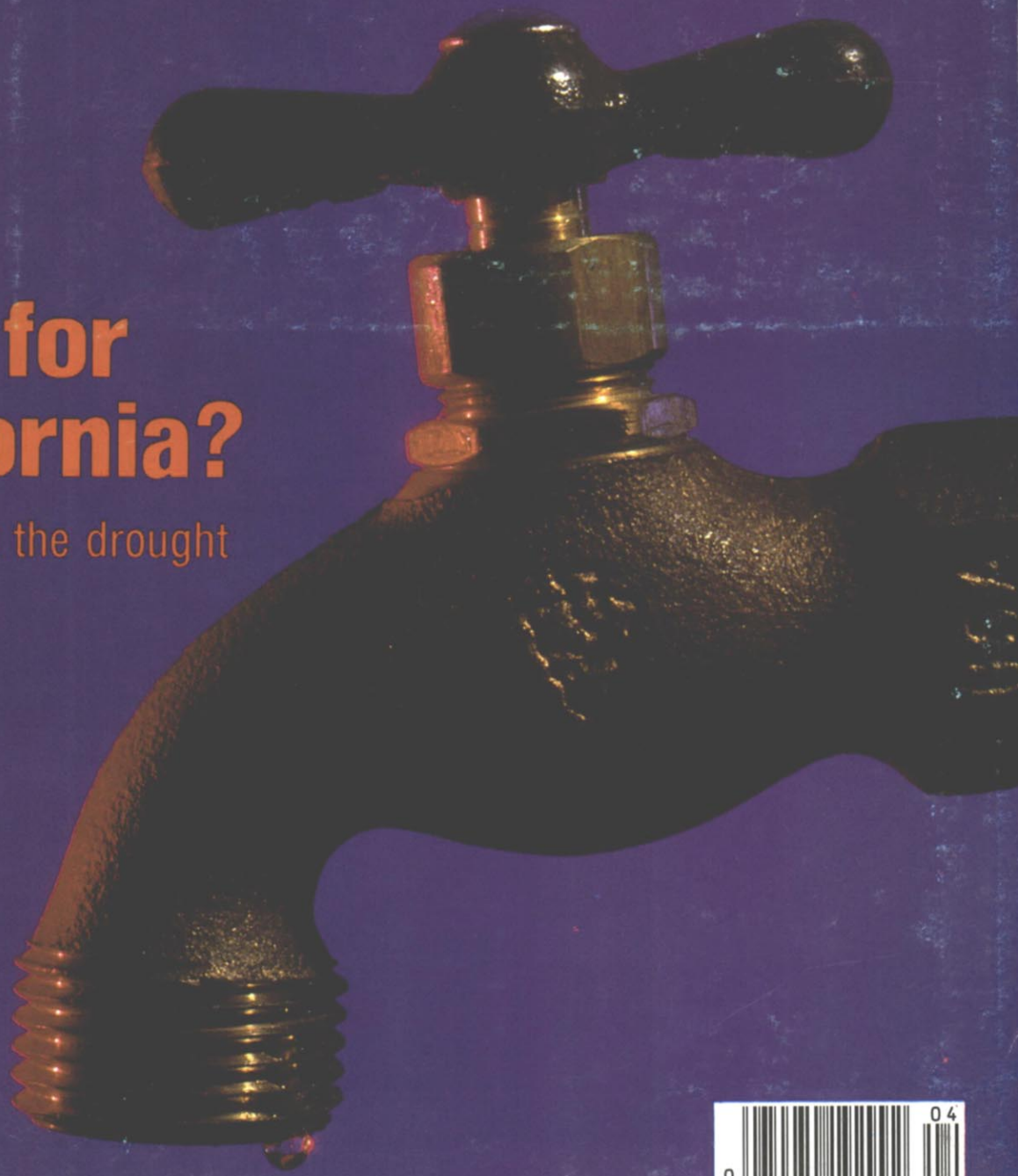
Coping with the drought



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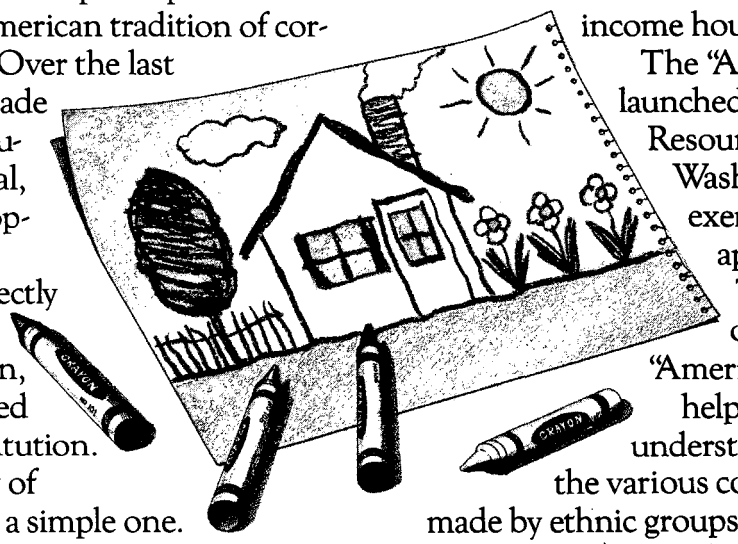

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California JOURNAL

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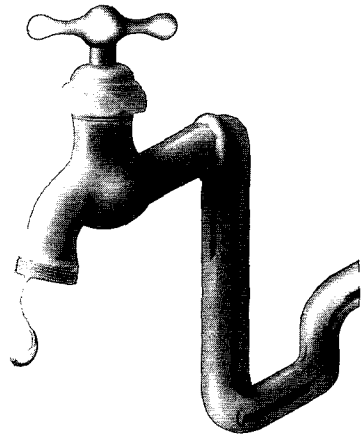

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UP FRONT

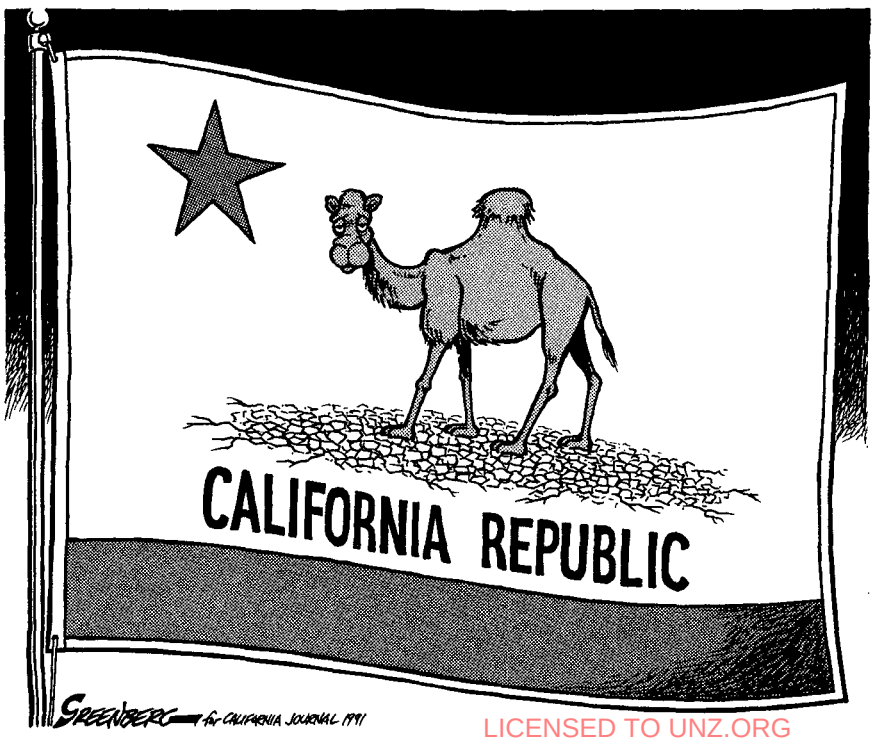
Bob Connelly, the ever-thoughtful staff honcho at the Assembly Rules Committee, has written to members of the Capitol Press Association concerning "the apparent lack of minority representation" among reporters covering the Legislature. "The committee asks that your principals be advised that membership in the Capitol Press Corps should reflect the diversity found in California's population and hopes that media employers will work to correct this inequity," Connelly wrote. We agree. Of course, if any group should reflect the diversity found in California's population, it is the Assembly itself. As noted in a story on the 1990 Census (see page 189), California's minorities make up nearly half the state. Yet, they make up only 14 percent of the Assembly. Hispanics account for one in four Californians but only one in 20 Assembly members. Asians are 9 percent of the population, zero percent of the Assembly. Blacks are the only major minority group to run ahead of the real world; they have 7 percent of the population and 9 percent of the Assembly.

No, Peter Detwiler has not become a consultant to the Senate Transporation Committee. Regardless of what may have been written in last month's story on ethics training, Detwiler is — and has been since 1982 — a consultant to the Senate Local Government Committee. Yes, the writer of that story suffers from occasional bouts of accute short-term memory loss.

Pete Wilson's closet. A little-known fact was hauled from the depths of Pete Wilson's closet on February 26th when the governor was introduced as guest speaker at a Copley Newspapers conference by Herb Klein, former communications director for the Nixon White House. Recalling the famous "You won't have Richard Nixon to kick around anymore" press conference that marked the end of Nixon's futile bid to become California governor in 1962, Klein added: "The person who escorted [Nixon] to his car and drove him home to what he thought was going to be political oblivion was a young advance man named Pete Wilson."

Wilson did not elaborate on Klein's recollection, except to note, "There are too many in this room who know too much."

The joy of the movies. Back in January, the governor and his wife, Gayle, wanted to take in a movie. Not as easy as one might think. State Police, charged with the governor's safety, went to the theater and picked out two good seats for the the Wilsons. Then, they picked out a whole bunch of seats around the governor's seats — and roped them off. Thus, the Wilsons watched the movie surrounded by a sea of empty seats — making the governor even more conspicuous than had he walked unescorted to the box office, bought a couple of tickets and some popcorn, and occupied any old aisle seat. It has been reported that Wilson was mortified by the experience. But spokesman Bill Livingstone said the Wilsons have since gone to other movies — without the elaborate precautions. Now you know why former Governor George Deukmejian used to slip away from his security team now and then to enjoy a quiet ice cream cone with his family.



It's budget time and, over the past few years, budget time has meant a lengthy memo from Republican Assembly Tom McClintock regarding how the state can save money. This year, McClintock proposes to save $14 billion (without really trying). Among his savings: $16.4 million by eliminating the California Arts Council; $875 million by privatizing local-government operations for emergency medical services, street lighting, street repairs, parks and recreation, and public transit; $294 million by phasing out the State Teachers Retirement System; $1.5 billion by also phasing out the state employee retirement system; $3.85 billion by doing away with the current school system and providing $4000 vouchers to parents who could then send their children to any public or private school; $740 million by doing away with mass-transit subsidies to

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CalTrans. Implement this agenda? No sweat; one wave of the tooth fairy's wand ought to do it.

Civics lesson — reality version. Seems a student at Horace Mann Junior High School in San Francisco sent a letter to her state senator not long ago, asking if that senator could do something about the homeless problem. The letter was hand written and clearly identified its sender as a seventh grader participating in her school's Street Law Project. The senator — independent Quentin Kopp — sent two replies. In the first, Kopp said the homeless problem was under the jurisdiction of local officials in San Francisco. He said she should take her complaint to the city and graciously supplied Art Agnos' City Hall address. As if that lesson in how lawmakers communicate with constituents wasn't enough, Kopp also gave the student a timely lesson in *why* they communicate: In his second reply, Kopp solicited a $25 donation from the student while inviting her to a fund-raising event — a "spectacular wine and hors d'oeuvres reception" — at the Slavonic Cultural Center on April 4th. She was urged to make her check out to "Kopp's Good Government Committee." "Please join me for a glass of wine," he wrote. Word has it the student declined, since she is 12.

"Nothing is so corrupting as a great idea whose time is past."

— John Grier

Come across a blurb lately that's nosy, newsy or smartalecky about California government, politics or politicians? Share it with the Journal. *We pay up to $25 for entertaining tidbits published in "Up Front." So, rush your items to Up Front, 1114 Capitol Avenue, Sacramento CA 95814. Sorry, submissions cannot be returned.*

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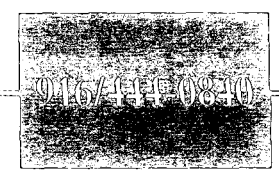

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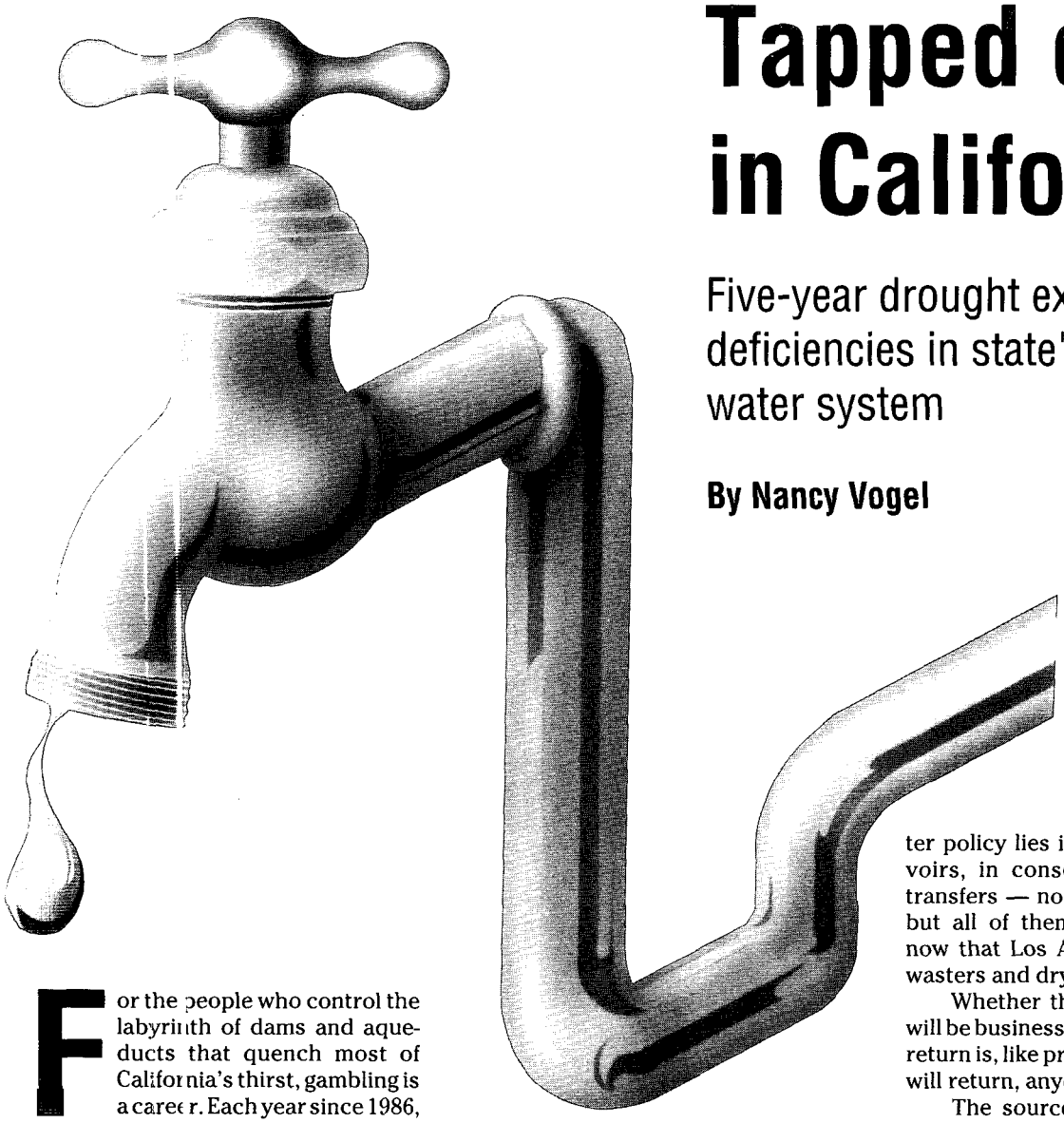

Tapped out in California

Five-year drought exposes deficiencies in state's water system

By Nancy Vogel

For the people who control the labyrinth of dams and aqueducts that quench most of California's thirst, gambling is a career. Each year since 1986, when floods plagued the northern half of the state, dam operators bet on wet years.

They lost.

Now it is as clear as the skies that 1991 will be a fifth consecutive drought year.

Reservoirs that usually swell with winter rain are more dirt than water. The water project that serves two of every three Californians has almost shut down. Desperate cities are weighing the costs of desalinization plants, farmers are struggling to keep trees alive and fire threatens parched forests.

In a state where water, money and power are interchangeable, there has never been so little water and so many Californians. Early this year Governor Pete Wilson, at no small political risk, stepped in to manage the drought, and many observers say that so far he is playing his hand well. But if it does not rain hard soon, the stakes will soar.

Even in wet years nothing splinters California as sharply or along so many lines as the subject of who gets how much water. So it is no surprise that this drought, which bares inequalities like an empty reservoir exposes boulders, has prompted calls for reform.

"Our water system is based on an article of faith that whether it rains or not we should allow anyone to use as much water as they want for whatever they want at a reasonable price," said Sacramento's Democratic Assemblyman Phillip Isenberg — one of the strongest advocates of shunting water from thirsty crops, such as rice and cotton, to cities.

Others say California's future water policy lies in building more reservoirs, in conservation, or in water transfers — none of these new ideas, but all of them argued passionately now that Los Angeles is fining water wasters and dry fields are lying fallow.

Whether the state's water policy will be business-as-usual once the rains return is, like predicting *when* the rains will return, anyone's bet.

The source of California's water wrangling is simple.

Hydrologically speaking, California is lopsided. About three-quarters of the fresh water available in the state originates north of Sacramento, while 75 percent of the demand — most of the farms and people — lies to the south. To balance the supplies, two major water projects suck Sierra snowmelt south.

The Central Valley Project, completed in the mid-1940s, is run by the federal Bureau of Reclamation. It can deliver about seven million acre feet of water a year from reservoirs on the Sacramento, American and Trinity Rivers. (An acre foot — 326,000 gallons — is enough water to supply a family of five for a year, or to irrigate a third of an acre for one growing season.)

The main components of the second water provider, the State Water Project, were finished in the early 1970s. The state Department of Water Re-

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Nancy Vogel writes for the California News Service, a project of the University of California graduate school of journalism at Berkeley.

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sources operates this 500-mile project, which begins with Oroville Dam on the Feather River and ends below Los Angeles. It supplies some two million acre-feet of water to San Joaquin Valley farmers and cities in the north and south. Metropolitan Water District, the project's largest urban contractor, serves 15 million people from Los Angeles to San Diego.

Because the Central Valley Project was built to help settle arid California under the federal Reclamation Act, its water is subsidized by taxpayers. Users do not pay the costs of maintaining and operating the $2.4 billion system, let alone the interest on building it.

For example, the Westlands Water District in Fresno County, the largest federal water contractor, gets subsidized water for $17 an acre-foot while the full cost rate is $42 an acre-foot, according to a 1989 General Accounting Office study.

Water from the state project is more expensive. Its 30 contracting agencies pay construction, interest and transportation costs. Kern County farmers pay about $50 an acre foot, for example, while the Metropolitan Water District pays $250 an acre foot because to reach Los Angeles, massive pumps must ship the water 2000 feet over the Tehachapi Mountains.

Besides bringing water to some of the richest land on earth and allowing semi-arid cities to spread, the projects stave off floods and drought. Proof lies in the fact that agriculture, which uses 80 percent of California's water, generated record high gross receipts of $17.8 billion in 1990, a fourth continuous year of drought.

But each year compounds the next, and the tenacious drought has struck hardest this year.

With each new sunny day, the state moves closer to matching the severity of the historic 1929-1934 drought. University of Arizona scientists who studied Sierra tree rings say that those years may have been the driest in California in the past 400 years.

In the four years between 1931 and 1934, for example, estimated runoff hit only 37 million acre feet, or about half of average. Runoff in the past four years averaged 42 million acre feet. But 1991 may well be dry enough to make the five years since 1987 as dry as, if not drier, than the six-year Dust Bowl drought.

Faced with an early February Sierra snowpack just 10 percent of normal, major reservoirs at half the average storage, and insufficient rain, water project operators slashed deliveries. The State Water Project first cut all water to farmers. Two weeks later it asked cities to get by with only 10 percent of the usual amount.

The Central Valley Project followed suit, announcing that as of March 1st, most of its agricultural contractors would get only 25 percent of their entitlements. Water to the two million people in cities it serves would be slashed by 25 or 50 percent, officials said.

In the rush to ration after the announcement of the cutbacks, the most severe since the projects began pumping water, few people questioned whether better planning could have prevented such drastic action.

But Patrick Porgans, a Sacramento resource consultant, charges the state with mismanaging its reservoirs. The state project operators made full deliveries to farmers in the first three years of the drought, he says, which cut the supply available later for cities.

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REVISED EDITION March 1, 1991

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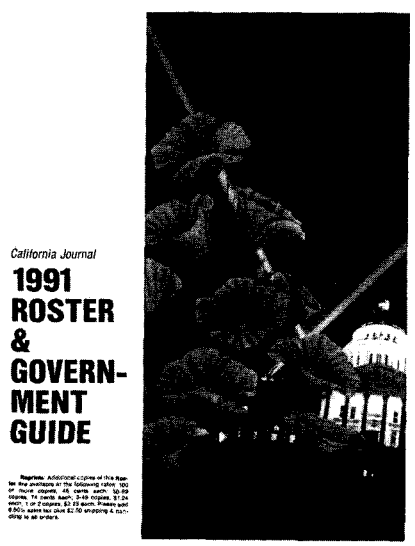

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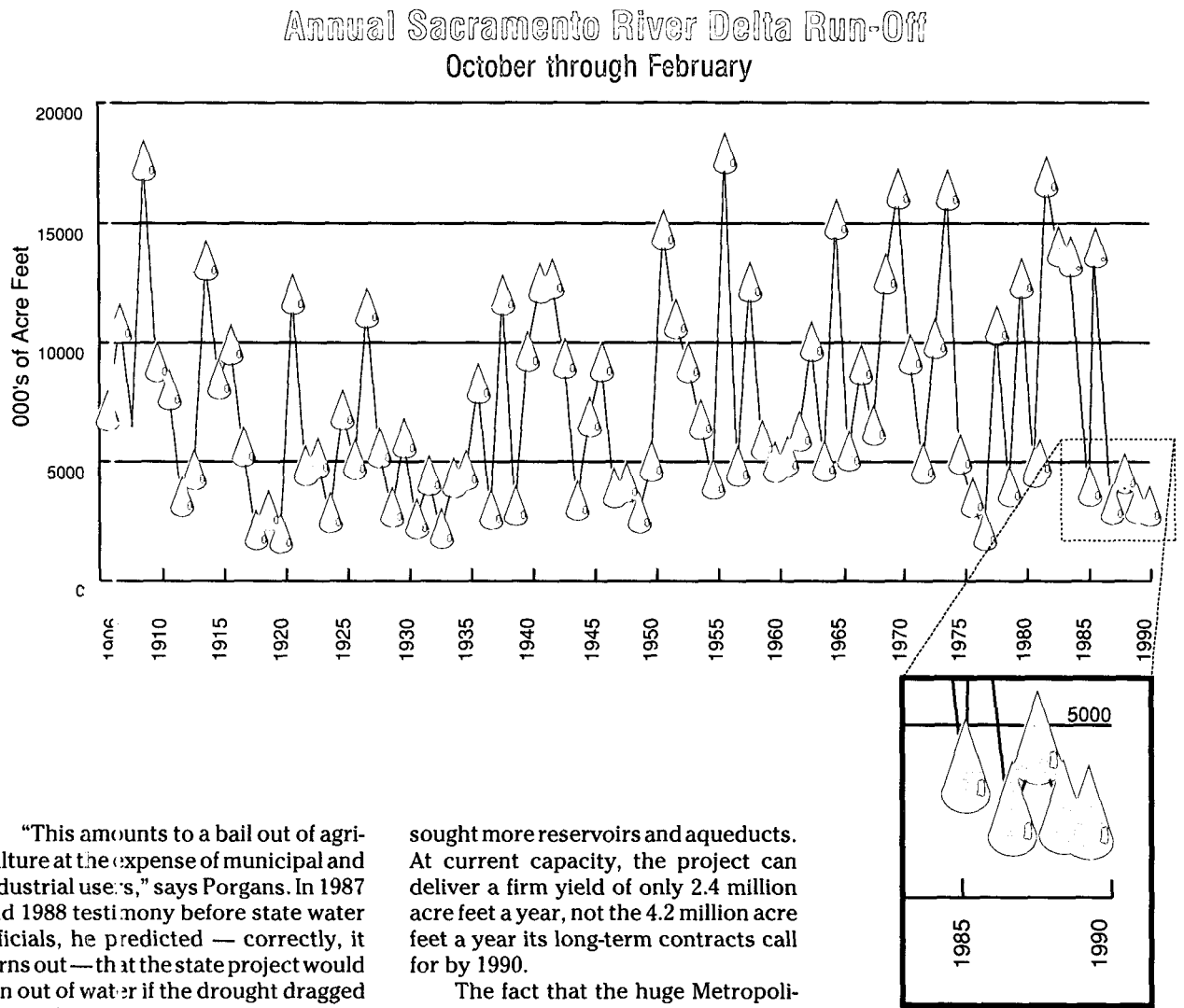

"This amounts to a bail out of agriculture at the expense of municipal and industrial users," says Porgans. In 1987 and 1988 testimony before state water officials, he predicted — correctly, it turns out — that the state project would run out of water if the drought dragged on and farmers got full deliveries.

Under the terms of state water contracts, farmers take the first cutbacks in dry years. Although 1987, 1988 and 1990 were all classified as critically dry years (1989 was "dry"), the projects made full agricultural deliveries until 1990. That year farmers' supplies were cut by 50 percent.

"They were playing Russian roulette and the public lost," said Porgans. He argues that operators made full deliveries to farmers in those drought years to secure the project's financing. If farmers got no water and could grow no crops, they might miss their water payments to the state. Contractors must pay for water whether they receive it or not.

Non-payment by farmers could put at risk the revenue bonds the project floated in 1960 to finance construction, says Porgans. If the project's bond rating slipped, the state would in turn have to pay higher interest rates on any new bonds floated to finance new construction, he says.

And project managers have long sought more reservoirs and aqueducts. At current capacity, the project can deliver a firm yield of only 2.4 million acre feet a year, not the 4.2 million acre feet a year its long-term contracts call for by 1990.

The fact that the huge Metropoli-

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tan Water District contracts and pays for much more water than it now uses allows the project to meet the needs of all of its clients and to even sell surplus water to growers in most years.

But state project managers look anxiously to the day, probably in the next decade, when the MWD will demand its full entitlement. That day is hastened by non-stop growth in Southern California and court decisions that limit the amount of Colorado River and Mono Lake water that the MWD can take.

Robert Potter, deputy director of the Department of Water Resources, which runs the State Water Project, blamed nature for this year's water shortages. If managers had known 1991 would be so dry, he said, they "certainly would have run the operation differently."

"I think our operation was very prudent," said Potter. "It was based on risk analysis and consultations with contractors."

The State Water Contractors agreed to the full agricultural deliveries, said George Baumli, executive director of the group that represents 28 of the 30 agencies buying state water. "It appeared to make the most sense at the time," said Baumli.

Theoretically, under the project's delivery rules, cities should have still gotten 50 percent of normal deliveries when agriculture was cut 100 percent in February. But there simply was not enough water.

The state project recently set up an internal borrowing program for five agricultural agencies in danger of missing their May payments. In five years the agencies must pay back the Department of Water Resources funds, with interest.

The Central Valley Project is not without its critics, either. Congressman George Miller, a Democrat from Martinez and acting chairman of the House Interior Committee, recently accused the federal project of squandering its meager supplies on farmers growing subsidized crops at the expense of thirsty cities. Miller urged Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan to suspend even the project's reduced deliveries to growers, which will draw the project's reserves to their lowest levels ever by October. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which runs the project, says that to do so would violate contracts.

Others warn that the Central Valley Project must hold back its reserves so that if the drought continues, water is available to repel salt water in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Both projects pump the bulk of their water from the Delta.

"If we don't send less water to the farmers we'll face disaster," says Gerald Meral, executive director of the Planning and Conservation League. It could take years to cleanse reservoirs of saltwater, he says.

The Delta—where the Sacramento and San Joaquin River mingle and run into San Francisco Bay—is the heart of California's water system and its water battles. It drains 40 percent of the state's water and nurses the remnants of a once-thriving fishery. It also feeds the huge pumps of both projects.

Since 1964 the State Water Project has planned to build a peripheral canal to skirt the Delta, pulling clean Sacramento River water directly to the south Delta pumps. Water is degraded by ag-

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By Richard Krolak

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'hoto by Rich Pedroncelli

Folsom Lake

ricultural runoff and salinity as it winds between peat levees in the Delta, and meandering sloughs inhibit the pumps.

But a 1982 referendum killed a bill to fulfill the State Water Project's canal plans. Environmentalists feared that more water diversions would harm the fragile estuary and some powerful San Joaquin Valley growers felt the bill contained too many environmental protections. Southern Californians, too, opposed it because they felt that, at $3.1 billion, it cost too much.

A 1984 plan sponsored by former Governor George Deukmejian to build a shorter canal was also defeated by public opposition. Outrage over "Duke's ditch" soured Deukmejian on water policy for the rest of his years as governor.

Less grand additions to the State Water Project eventually met legislative approval, however, and work on a new south Delta reservoir and an underground water bank in Kern County are underway. These will help to capture high spring flows through the Delta to store for summer use. Taken together, with the widening of Delta channels, they are expected to increase the state project's capacity by up to 845,000 acre feet a year.

But visions of a peripheral canal to draw south more water never faded away. In this fifth year of drought, water planners are gauging the public's mood.

"There's heightened interest," says Arthur Littleworth, a lawyer for the State Water Contractors. "I think what people are finally going to understand is that we've got unstable water supplies."

Littleworth noted that 20 years have passed since a major water project (the New Melones Dam on the Stanislaus River) was built in California. Since then the southern state has added about seven million people, he said. "Some additional facilities are needed," said Littleworth. "We can't meet our needs with reclamation or conservation or even water transfers."

The man who sponsored the peripheral canal bill also has his finger to the wind. State Senator Ruben Ayala, a Chico Democrat and legislative point man for Southern California water interests, says that he senses "a cohesive effort to protect what we have and get more at a later date."

But he says he's not the man to do it now.

In his peripheral canal campaign, Ayala says, water agency lobbyists abandoned him and Northern Californians nearly "tarred and lynched" him. He won't support another canal bill, he says, until the timing is right. And although Los Angeles City Councilman Nate Holden recently asked him to introduce a canal bill and threatened to gather enough signatures for an initiative if Ayala refused, Ayala says the momentum is still building.

"They can get someone else to lead the parade," says Ayala. "I'm not the only one who likes to have his head cut

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Don Maughan and the politics of water scarcity

W. Don Maughan, chairman of the state Water Resources Control Board, wields power that rarely pleases. He heads a group that acts as the fulcrum for water disputes in a state where the water is on top and the thirst on the bottom.

"When you balance something you don't have any constituency," says the 68-year old water guru. "We don't have any strong support out there."

Established by the Legislature in 1967, the water board allocates surface water rights and protects water quality. It controls who can divert how much from what stream in California, and, along with nine regional boards, monitors and cleans up water pollution. And while most everyone agrees that Maughan is superbly qualified to head the board, his decisions rarely please anyone.

"Don Maughan is an impressive figure who has done almost everything a Western water specialist would or could do in the last 30 years," says William Davoren, executive director of the Bay Institute, a non-profit environmental group. But like nearly everyone else with a special interest in California water, Davoren is Maughan's admirer and antagonist. He accuses Maughan of "knuckling under" to water diverters in a key 1989 decision about freshwater flows to San Francisco Bay.

That decision, which would have limited Southern California's water in order to send more spring flows to the Bay for the sake of fish and the estuary's ecology, caught the wrath of agri-business and water agencies, as well as some environmentalists who felt it did not offer the Bay and the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta enough protection. The board eventually dropped the plan.

Maughan bore the brunt of the criticism, and many powerful groups lobbied, unsuccessfully, against his re-appointment by Governor George Deukmejian in 1989.

Maughan says that since the uproar over his board's proposal, the state has learned much about how water project diversions affect Delta fish and wildlife. A new proposal will probably focus on maximizing benefits to fish and wildlife by releasing water to the Bay according to season and precipitation, says Maughan.

That new plan will be written at the end of a long-running series of public hearings on new water quality standards for the Delta, which was once a thriving fishery and now supplies California's two biggest water projects.

"We've got to manage the supply better and operate the projects so that they take care of fish better than they have in the past," says Maughan. And cities, he says, should foot the bill for new hatcheries.

"They're the ones who can afford to mitigate the adverse effects on fish and wildlife," says Maughan.

A Salt Lake City native and the father of six children, Maughan launched his water career 45 years ago. As a civil engineer fresh from the University of Utah, he helped the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation draw up an ambitious plan to send Northwest river water to California and Arizona. Dubbed the United Western Investigation, the plan came to naught — Washington's late U.S. Senator Henry Jackson squashed efforts to tap the Columbia River in 1965 — but Maughan says that he still has a copy of the report at home.

Maughan had a hand in some of the West's most important water developments. At the Colorado River Board of California through the 1950s, he helped pull together testimony for the U.S. Supreme Court in an 11-year-long court fight

off once in a while."

Many people who support the idea of a canal through or around the Delta agree that strong salinity and freshwater flow standards should be solidly in place before discussions begin.

Southern Californians seek to protect the Delta from levee collapse and saltwater intrusion because it is their main source of drinking water. Northern California environmentalists argue that the Delta deserves protection because it is a priceless ecosystem, critical to salmon, striped bass and several endangered species.

"The state needs to come forward and say that above all it will protect the Delta," says Sunne McPeak, a Contra Costa County supervisor who also chairs the group Committee for Water Policy Consensus and who helped lead the fight against the peripheral canal in 1982. Such a guarantee would give everyone a baseline, she says.

But major new water projects, at any rate, are years away. And the immediate effects of this drought distract government leaders everywhere.

When the State Water Project announced February 25th that it would deliver only 10 percent of the usual amount to cities, the MWD had already taken its share for the year. The MWD turned in desperation to the Colorado River, to groundwater and to asking its customers to cut use by 49 percent. San Francisco imposed 55 percent cutbacks — its strictest ever — and even Sacramento, embraced by two major rivers and without water meters, may soon ask residents to limit outdoor watering to twice a week.

Things are particularly difficult in communities that deliberately limited their water supplies. Marin County and the city of Santa Barbara both held back on water development as a way to restrict population growth. Now, they both must impose Draconian measures to curb water use. In Marin, households can use no more than 50 gallons per day per person, a third of what the typical Californian uses. In Santa Barbara, lawns long ago went brown, and the city now plans to build a plant to take the salt out of sea water.

In California's cities, the drought creates inconvenience. In the vast fields of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys, the most productive in the country, it creates business dilemmas.

Generous aquifers eased growers through last year's cutbacks, but now many wells must be plunged deeper, at greater energy costs, and some in Monterey County are pulling up seawater. Farmers all over the state are planting the most valuable crops they can with whatever water they have.

"Cotton's going to take a big hit; rice is going to take a big hit," said Mike Henry, a California Farm Burear Federation spokesman. "These guys are going to be planning for fruits and veg-

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between Arizona and California over Colorado River water rights.

Arizona eventually won the case, and California lost rights to more than a million acre feet of water. Maughan moved on to the interstate planning branch of California's Department of Water Resources in Sacramento, and from there to Washington, D.C., where, as executive director of the federal Water Resources Council, he worked on national water policy and helped to create federal-state river basin commissions

Maughan served on California's water board between 1973 and 1979, then left for the Arizona Department of Water Resources. There he helped execute an unprecedented groundwater-management law that forced users to ration. In 1986 Governor Deukmejian drew him back to California's water board.

A wheelchair user who contracted polio when he was 32, just months before a vaccine was discovered, Maughan presides over endless meetings, his chin often cradled in his palm, with a quick smile and boundless attention.

He says that California now stands at a water policy juncture.

"It's been building and now the drought's come along and put it right where something's got to be done," Maughan says.

Although the drought has temporarily forced farmland out of production he says that he does not think that California will decide to permanently limit agriculture's water supply, as Arizona has. Irrigated acreage in Arizona is restricted in order to give cities sufficient water.

But as California's cities swell, agribusiness may face more subtle limits, says Maughan.

"I find it hard to believe that we'll ever export more to bring more land under irrigation," says Maughan of water from the Delta, "and irrigated land that's got drainage problems may have to be reduced."

Some farmland, particularly in the Western San Joaquin Valley, generates drainage laden with naturally-occurring but poisonous minerals. No safe long-term solution now exists now to dispose of it.

Maughan also suggests that, in order to make the best use of the state's water, some land could be irrigated only in wet years. But he says that he opposes telling farmers not to plant thirsty, subsidized crops such as rice and cotton.

"Some people would like to change cropping patterns, but I think that the market dictates that more than anything else," says Maughan. "We've already seen some of that in this drought."

The drought might create a dam-building mood in California, says Maughan, but reasonable sites are limited. Projects other than an Auburn Dam, a reservoir south of the Delta to store excess runoff and an underground water bank in Kern County are "fairly remote," he says. And Maughan refuses to say how he feels about a peripheral canal skirting the Delta, the likes of which was resoundingly beaten by voters in 1982.

"I just never have formalized a formal opinion on it," he says.

Before California can nail down a far-reaching water policy, says Maughan, it needs to choose its priorities. How much weight should be given to open space and wildlife ("public trust" values that the California Supreme Court ruled in 1983 the water board must accommodate in its decisions, even to the point of changing decades-old water rights). How should water be shared in dry years? Should farmers be banned from putting more land under irrigation?
"The other plans have been arranged around physical facilities," says Maughan. "I think the new plan ought to be arranged around goals and how you're going to apportion water."

— Nancy Vogel

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etables because they are the high-value crops."

Richard Howitt, an agricultural economist at the University of California, Davis, used a computer model that divides the state into six regions to estimate that farm losses this year will total $650 million. Regions with secure water supplies, such as the Imperial and Sacramento Valleys, will fare well, said Howitt, either by growing crops or selling water. About a million of California's 7.5 million irrigated acres will lie fallow this year, he predicted, and most farmers would survive but few would make profits.

Calcot, a cotton growers' cooperative in Bakersfield, estimates that only half the usual million acres will be planted in the subsidized crop this year. The loss to the Central Valley cotton industry could hit $1.5 billion, said Kevin McDermott, vice president of Calcot's economic research.

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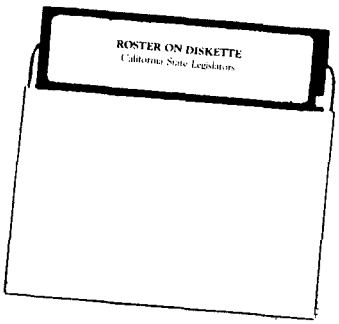

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first in a drought because no rain falls to make grass grow. In 1977 livestock constituted $414 million of the state's $566 million agricultural losses. The California Cattlemen's Association estimates that 30 percent of the state's herds have already been sold. And with hay growers' stock of cheap, poor-quality hay gone, ranchers are paying up to $45 more per ton of cattle feed.

In Kern County, the country's third most productive farm county, the Kern County Water Agency estimates that of its 214,000 irrigated acres with no groundwater, some 83,000 acres are planted in permanent crops such as almonds, pistachios and grapes. If those trees and vines don't get water this year, the loss will top $8 billion over the next ten years in income and jobs, said Kern water resources manager Gary Bucher.

The Kern agency has about 200,000 acre feet of banked groundwater and is now hustling to fix old wells and drill new ones to get it into aqueducts.

"Next year dry is just incomprehensible," said Bucher.

Governor Pete Wilson, barely settled in his capital office, joined the high-stakes drought gamble in early February. With his emergency powers within easy reach, he announced a plan to stave off the drought.

A hastily organized "Drought Action Team" of state agency leaders, chaired by Department of Water Resources director David Kennedy, devised the plan. Like the budget Wilson unveiled in January, it asked for sacrifice from all Californians.

"We're going to have to apportion and share the pain on this," he said at a February 15 press conference, one day after the Central Valley Project announced its 75 percent cuts.

Wilson urged every community to get rationing plans in place and prepare to cut use by half if it did not rain soon. He stopped short of using his drought emergency powers to force such cutbacks.

"As a former mayor, I would certainly take no pleasure in usurping the prerogatives of local governments," said Wilson. "But I will not hesitate to assume emergency powers if such powers become necessary to protect Californians from the worst effects of the drought."

Wilson asked the Legislature to set aside $100 million for a drought fund and has created a state-run water bank to match water buyers and sellers. Some of the water gathered should stay in

Maughan

reserve in case the drought persisted, said Wilson.

He bolstered fire-fighting forces and urged the Department of Fish and Game to do everything "humanly possible" to help beleaguered wildlife, including transporting fish to better habitat in trucks.

And if it rains, announced Wilson, the state should re-evaluate its complete cut-off of water to agriculture.

The drought pulled Wilson into politically dangerous territory mined with anxious, powerful constituents such as agribusiness, which donated generously to his gubernatorial campaign. Making himself the leader makes him liable for blame in case of fiasco, such as saltwater contaminating the projects' delivery systems. But so far he seems to be making all the right moves.

"I was quite impressed with him, especially the way he fielded questions of a technical nature," said Don Maughan, chairman of the state Water Resources Control Board, who watched Wilson in action for the first time at the press conference.

The water board, four Governor Deukmejian appointees (there is one vacancy), oversees use of the state's water. They jumpstarted the state's slow response to the drought in late January by discussing rationing plans strict enough to alarm water agency directors, but they quickly acquiesced when Governor Wilson took charge and relegated them to team players.

"It's such an important matter I think it's going to take all of us to work

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Miller

it out," said Maughan later.

Senate Republican leader Ken Maddy of Fresno welcomed Wilson's appeal for a special legislative session on the drought.

"It gives us the opportunity to move and move quickly," he said. Maddy described Wilson as "the right man" to handle the drought because he is a Republican with strong ties to environmentalists.

"And if we're going to talk about long-term solutions to the water question," said Maddy, a staunch supporter of agriculture, environmentalists "must be involved."

Local leaders said they appreciated the reign Wilson gave them to adopt their own solutions.

"So far I think he's done a very good job," said Sunne McPeak, the Contra Costa County supervisor. "We need state leadership but it's good that each district can figure out how to meet those needs."

Whether Wilson continues to win praise for his leadership or must wield emergency powers to get water to the masses depends primarily upon the new state-run water bank.

No other response to the drought can get water to critical areas as quickly as selling water as a commodity. Although the Department of Water Resources has brokered transfers before, there is little financial incentive to sell water in years of normal precipitation and bureaucratic hurdles rarely make it worth the effort.

Any city with surplus or a grower willing to forgo planting can sell water. Prime candidates are Central Valley Project contractors who hold water rights so old that they still get, under law, 75 percent of their water while others have been cut to 25 percent. Many are Sacramento Valley rice farmers.

It takes about 7.75 acre feet of water per acre to grow rice (of the crops widely grown in California, only alfalfa uses more). It is also a surplus crop, subsidized by the government under a program that allows growers to fallow half of their acreage and receive almost full payment.

Rice farmers say that not planting will hurt the millers, truckers and salespeople who depend upon their harvests, and a simple lump sum for fallow acreage cannot be fairly distributed.

"Water marketing does not address third-party issues," said Bob Herkert, spokesman for the California Rice Industry Committee. "People are looking to rice for a very simplistic solution to this horrible problem."

Herkert said that whole rural communities would collapse without rice sales, and flooded rice fields are critical to migrating waterfowl now that most of the Central Valley's wetlands have been drained.

Rice growers are under special pressure these days since water diverted from rice planting could take care of more than 15 million people, but all of California agriculture is defensive.

For years politicians such as Congressman Miller and Assemblyman Phil Isenberg have argued that agriculture uses an inordinate amount of water for contributing only 7 percent to the state's gross product. California could solve its water problems, they say, if farmers used water more efficiently and stopped planting subsidized crops such as rice and cotton.

"A 25 percent savings from cities, business and industry in California would equal the same amount of water if agriculture saved less than three percent," says Isenberg, who suggests that the state pay farmers to take land out of production, especially where selenium in the soil leaches out to create poisonous drainage.

The drought does not seem to have driven a wedge between urban and rural California yet, despite the greater attention paid to agriculture's critics.

When polled by the *Los Angeles Times* in late January, 35 percent of some 2000 Californians said that they believed agriculture used water efficiently. Only 22 percent, on the other hand, said the same of residential users.

The poll showed, said Mike Henry of the California Farm Bureau Federation, that "contrary to some loud voices in the state, most people don't believe agriculture wastes water."

Nonetheless, Henry predicted an "explosion" of animosity as water for cities disappears, and only rain can change that.

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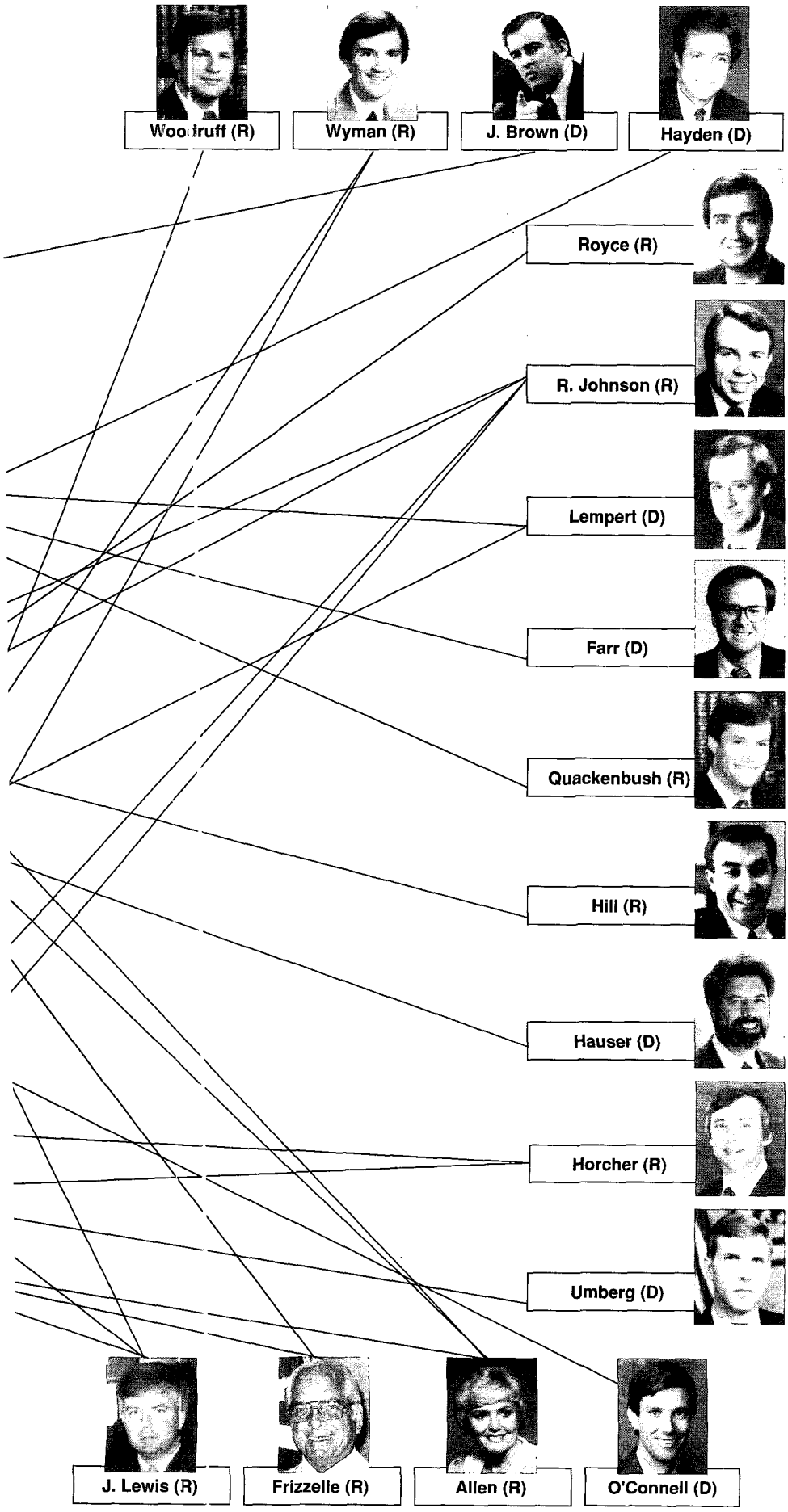

1992 elections:

A political junkie's dream come true

By A.G. Block

Buck up, political junkies. Put on a smile. Suck in that stale, smokey air. Sure, you feel blue now. But wait. A thrill ride is just around the corner. Yes, we know you were looking forward to a terrific year of presidential politics, to a coast-to-coast donnybrook among hundreds — thousands — of Democratic hopefuls who would bash each other for the right to go *mano a mano* with George Bush. And then this, this lightning-quick war comes along and all but puts the kibosh on your dreams, and lifts President Bush's popularity right up there with Kevin Costner's. And suddenly, all those Democratic wanna-bes are sidling toward the door marked "1996." And, 1992 looks like a sickening love fest, with everyone patting everyone else on the back and Democrats trying not to offend anyone while running against a popular incumbent president.

Well, fear not. In California, at least, 1992 could turn out to be a political junkie's dream come true. From the Oregon border to San Diego, from the Pacific to the Sierras, politicians of ev-

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ery stripe and stature could stage a wholesale rush toward greener pastures. And since many of these politicians will be legislative incumbents forced to move up or out, a kind of fatalism could seep into the process, making the 1992 election season seem like the lemming's march to the sea.

Blame the situation on an harmonic conversion of five distinct events:

- the 1990 U.S. Census, which resulted in seven new congressional seats for California;
- reapportionment;
- Pete Wilson's resignation from the U.S. Senate after being elected governor in 1990;
- Alan Cranston's decision not to seek reelection to the U.S. Senate; and, last but not least,
- passage last November of Proposition 140, which placed strict term limits on members of the state Legislature.

Throw those five elements into the cauldron, mix in a few important special and local elections, and you have a shock wave that could reverberate through every level of political activity. So, cheer up, junkies, and focus on a best-case scenario for in 1992, spiced with innumerable "what ifs."

First, much of this was made possible by the passage of Proposition 140. In case you don't remember, Proposition 140 did away with the notion of legislative service as a life career by limiting the terms of Assembly members to three (six years) and state senators to two (eight years). At the end of that time, and if Proposition 140 survives court challenges now underway, it's kaput, gone, out, terminated, pink-slipped and see ya later.

Although Proposition 140 also contained a 40 percent cut in legislative spending, there was no corresponding cut in legislators' political ambitions. So, ambitions intact, lawmakers must cast about for longer-term jobs. Assembly members look toward the state Senate; senators seek term-limit-free congressional districts; members of congress, with an anxious eye at the oncoming horde, dream of the U.S. Senate. It's all delicious fun.

The chain reaction itself starts with two races for the U.S. Senate. Normally, both of a state's senators do not stand for election in the same year. But when Pete Wilson left the Senate to become governor, he changed the timetable. As a senator, Wilson was not due before voters again until 1994. Not so his appointed successor, former state Senator John Seymour of Anaheim, who must run for election on his own in 1992. (He must then run again in 1994, when Wilson's term would have expired.) Thus, the state's "seat A" is up for election.

"Seat B," now held by veteran Democrat Alan Cranston, *is* due for election in 1992. Under normal circumstances, Cranston's renomination would have been a formality for the Democrats. A few Republicans would have fought it out in the primary for the right to challenge Cranston, and the general election campaign might have evolved into some minor bone for junkies to gnaw on. But Cranston's lengthy political career dissolved last year over allegations that he had maintained a too-cozy relationship with one Charles Keating, the former savings-and-loan magnate accused of buying favors from the government. With Cranston severely wounded by a mushrooming ethics problem, several Democratic members of Congress emerged in 1990 to challenge him. Cranston, plagued by bad health (he's battling prostate cancer), announced that he would not seek reelection.

Presto! Both California Senate seats are virtually wide open in the same election.

The chain reactions in Southern California started with the Seymour appointment. First, a trio of Republican Assembly members leaped into a special election to replace Seymour in the state Senate's 35th District — John Lewis (67th District), Doris Allen (71st District) and Nolan Frizzelle (69th District). One of them will no doubt succeed Seymour (Lewis seems to have the upper hand at this writing, thanks to support thrown his way by the GOP legislative establishment), thus opening up an Assembly seat, thus creating the need for one more special election in Orange County sometime down the road in 1991.

Also, Seymour's appointment drew fire from conservative Republicans (see "Seymour for the Senate," *CJ*, February 1991), one of whom — Congressman William Dannemeyer of Fullerton — decided to challenge him in the June 1991 primary. To take on Seymour, however, Dannemeyer will have to give up his hold on the 39th Congressional District. And that could prompt another bevy of Republican officeholders to seek Dannemeyer's seat in the House. House seats are especially attractive to members of the state Legislature in the wake of Proposition 140.

Along those lines, state Senator Ed Royce, an Anaheim Republican who represents the 32nd District, chose the GOP state convention in February to announce for Dannemeyer's seat. As presently drawn, however, that district takes in portions of several other legislative districts, including those now held by GOP Senator Frank Hill (31st District), and by GOP Assembly members Ross Johnson (64th District), Doris Allen and John Lewis.

Royce has a free ride in 1992 (he was just reelected in 1990 to a four-year term), but if he succeeds Dannemeyer, his Senate district would open up and might cause Johnson or GOP Assemblyman Paul Horcher (52nd District) to run for Royce's vacant seat. Depending on how the newly-reapportioned districts are constituted, even a Democrat like Tom Umberg (72nd District) might seek Royce's seat; as might the Republican Umberg defeated last November for the Assembly — former Assemblyman Curt Pringle.

Should Frank Hill win Dannemeyer's seat, he would vacate the 31st Senate District, causing Johnson, Lewis or Horcher to seek Hill's seat. (All three of their Assembly districts overlap Hill's Senate district although all three do not actually *live* in Hill's district. Still, changing residency has never been much of a problem for politicians; a mere formality met with a U-Haul trailer, a few modest furnishings and a few change-of-address cards.)

To date, no chain reaction will be set in motion on the Democratic side of the "Seat A" battle, since former San Francisco Mayor Dianne Feinstein is the only Democrat so far to challenge Seymour. Others, however, are contemplating it, including state Controller Gray Davis. His election to the U.S. Senate would allow Governor Wilson, a Republican, to name Davis' successor. Should that person come from, say, the state Senate, yet another chain reaction would take place in the scramble to replace Davis' successor.

Feel better, junkies?

Well, if you're still blue, consider the scramble for Alan Cranston's "Seat B." No fewer than six Republicans and six Democrats have either announced plans to run or are thinking seriously of running for the vacancy. Congressional Democrats Bob Matsui and Barbara Boxer have joined former Governor Jerry Brown and Lieutenant Governor Leo McCarthy in the Democratic primary. Congressman Mel Levine and Controller Davis are pondering it. Among Republicans, only television

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commentator Bruce Herschensohn has formally declared. But former Congressman Ed Zschau, who beat Herschensohn in the 1986 U.S. Senate primary then narrowly lost to Cranston, is considering it, as are Palm Springs Mayor Sonny Bono and three GOP congressmen: Tom Campbell, Bob Dornan and David Dreier.

If the incumbent members of Congress eventually go for the U.S. Senate, it could affect legislative and congressional districts from Marin County in the north to Santa Monica in the south.

Democrats Barbara Boxer (6th Congressional District), who represents Marin and part of San Francisco, and Robert Matsui (3rd Congressional District), who represents Sacramento, are already in the hunt. Matsui's announcement has Democratic Assemblyman Lloyd Connelly of Sacramento gearing up to run for Matsui's seat. Connelly will probably draw few challengers.

Boxer, on the other hand, will leave a district that overlaps no fewer than six legislative districts with an intriguing mix of incumbents. Will Senate Majority Leader Barry Keene vacate the 2nd Senate District to serve in Congress? He has a free ride in 1992. How about Democratic Assemblyman Dan Hauser? Or GOP Assemblymen Bill Filante and Stan Statham? (Two other legislators probably won't be interested: Democratic state Senator Milton Marks, who is 72; and Assembly Speaker Willie Brown Jr., who, one supposes, would not trade the second most-powerful political job in California for a back-bencher's role in Washington.)

In Southern California, 27th District Democratic Congressman Mel Levine of Santa Monica is said to be on the verge of announcing for Cranston's seat. Should he throw down the gauntlet, as many as seven state legislators could enter the race to succeed him. Among Democrats who may be interested are state Senator Gary Hart (18th District) and Assembly members Jack O'Connell (35th District), Tom Hayden (44th District), Curtis Tucker Jr. (50th District), Gwen Moore (49th District) and Terry Friedman (43rd District). Republican Assemblyman Gerald Felando's 51st District also overlaps part of Levine's, although as presently drawn, Levine's district is not particularly hospitable for a Republican. Hart is the only potential challenger with a free ride in 1992, but should he replace Levine, Assemblyman O'Connell would be a strong bet to run for Hart's Senate seat.

Several other Democrats also have announced for the Cranston seat, including former Governor Jerry Brown, who resigned as state party chairman to make the run, and Lieutenant Governor Leo McCarthy. In addition, Controller Davis could run for the Cranston seat. Again, Governor Wilson would be able to appoint McCarthy's or Davis' successor.

On the Republican side, 12th District Congressman Tom Campbell of Palo Alto is mentioned as a possible candidate to challenge for the Cranston seat, and his candidacy would set off yet another round of "what ifs." Campbell would be making an up-or-out move, and the race to replace him could involve four state Assembly members: Democrats Sam Farr (28th District), Bryon Sher (21st District) and Ted Lempert (20th District), and Republican Charles Quackenbush (22nd District). It might also involve 11th District GOP state Senator Rebecca Morgan, although Morgan was not interested in an appointment to the U.S. Senate in January and would probably not be interested in the House of Representatives.

Two Southern Republican congressmen also are reportedly mulling over a race for Cranston's seat: David Dreier, who hails from LaVerne and the 33rd District; and Bob Dornan of Garden Grove, who represents the 38th District. Both lawmakers would move up or out, prompting another gaggle of legislative wanna-bes to step out of the wings.

In Dreier's case, Republican state Senator Don Rogers (16th District), who has a free ride in 1992, might want to move to Washington. And, if he won Dreier's congressional seat, three Republican assemblymen might jump into the fray to succeed him in the Senate: Trice Harvey (33rd District), Phil Wyman (34th District) and Bill Lancaster (62nd District). Jim Costa (30th District) might also be interested if reapportionment made the district kinder to a Democrat.

Rogers isn't the only state senator who might be interested in Dreier's congressional seat; Republican Bill Leonard (25th District) also might make the reach. For Leonard, it would be up-or-out, since his Senate seat is up for election in 1992. If Leonard goes for Congress, four Assembly members could try to succeed him in the Senate: Republicans Paul Woodruff (61st District), Jim Brulte (65th District) and Wyman; and Democrat Jerry Eaves (66th District). Or, one or more of those Assembly members may skip the state Senate and try for Dreier's seat directly.

In Dornan's case, Republicans Doris Allen and Ross Johnson might vie for the vacated 38th District. They might be joined by whichever Republican wins John Seymour's old state Senate seat, or by whichever Republican wins the Assembly seat vacated by whichever Republican wins Seymour's old state Senate seat.

Still feeling blue? Then consider that 1992 will be the first election with seven new congressional seats allocated to California based on results of the recent census; seven wide open seats, distributed to high population-growth areas like Riverside-San Bernardino, San Diego and Orange County in the south; Sacramento and the East and South Bay areas in the north. Even more state lawmakers, prodded by their ambitions and inspired by Proposition 140, may roll the dice for the chance at another — perhaps more secure — office.

But wait. There's more. Will Democratic state Senator Lucy Killea (39th District) run for mayor of San Diego this year, opening up her Senate district for someone like GOP Assemblywoman Carol Bentley (77th District) or Democratic Assemblyman Mike Gotch (78th District)? Will Democratic state Senator Art Torres (24th District), rebuffed in his recent bid for the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, run instead for the Los Angeles City Council? Will Democrats Richard Polanco (55th Assembly District) and Lucille Roybal-Allard (56th Assembly District) then fight it out for Torres' Senate seat?

A preview of all this climbing and sliding is going on even as we speak. Republican Congressman John Doolittle of Carmichael vacated the 1st Senate District last year after being elected to Congress, prompting GOP Assemblyman Tim Leslie to seek Doolittle's Senate seat in a March 1991 special election. Democratic Assemblyman Pat Johnston of Stockton was elected to the state Senate's 5th District in January to replace Democrat John Garamendi, elected last November as the state's first insurance commissioner. State Senator Art Torres of Los Angeles tried for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors in February, but lost to Gloria Molina. Had he won, at least two Democratic members of the Assembly were poised to run for Torres' Senate seat. And so it goes.

See? Even though that lil' ole war may have taken the thunder out of the presidential race, that doesn't mean 1992 won't be fun after all.

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LA air board starts a fresh wind blowing

By Tom Waldman

Like the Los Angeles Lakers and Boston Celtics, the South Coast Air Quality Management District and many of the companies it regulates have a history of hostility towards one another. But Magic Johnson and Larry Bird are now friends; so too, it seems, is the situation with the AQMD and business, which have been growing noticeably closer.

This new-found willingness of both sides to listen, cooperate and share ideas will probably make it easier for the district to realize its ambitious proposals for achieving clean air by early in the next century.

"With better understanding—and no illusions—industries can focus their resources in the right place," said John Albin, vice president of product operations for Hughes Aircraft Company. Albin participates in a quarterly roundtable the AQMD started last year that brings together the district's executive officer James Lents and several business leaders for a discussion of environmental issues.

"One improvement I see is that the business community has been coming along with us more and saying, 'We understand and accept your premise that we have got to meet clean air standards in Los Angeles,'" said Lents, executive officer since 1986. "This changes the chemistry of the debate in a lot of ways. Business is putting some of its own ideas on the table, whereas they were in a defensive management plan between 1987 and 1989."

"My guess is that both sides realize that they have a major challenge to improve air quality," said Jeff Callender, a spokesman for Unocal Corporation. "It's better if they are working together

Tom Waldman is a freelance writer living in Los Angeles.

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than if the regulator is saying, 'You have to do this.'"

This new spirit has even survived the current recession, which Lents believes has led some members of the Legislature to wonder if the district should not curb its regulatory zeal until the economy improves. "There is some softening (in attitudes) out there compared to five years ago," he said, "driven by the recession and the fact that some businesses are leaving the state. It has caused people to want to be a little more cautious."

Lents

While an alliance between the AQMD and the private sector might alienate rabid environmentalists, it reflects the movement's continued strength. Born in the 1960s, the environmental movement today is no mere nostalgia trip. Unlike peace activists, who often seemed confused and dispirited during the Persian Gulf War, environmentalists continue to acquire powerful support both in and out of government.

Of course, as the bitter clash over the so-called Big Green initiative last fall demonstrates, business is not yet amenable to every new idea offered by self-proclaimed lovers of the planet.

According to Lents, the improving relationship between the AQMD and industry is the result of three factors:

First, a recognition on the part of business that the AQMD is committed to wiping out pollution in the next 20 years. The district's intentions were vividly illustrated by the March 1989 air-quality plan and a subsequent draft to the AQMP in December 1990, both of which contain many stringent regulations governing the behavior of businesses, commuters and homeowners.

Next, passage of the California Clean Air Act in September 1988, which established a legal mandate to achieve health-based state air-quality standards at the earliest practicable date.

Finally, passage of the federal Clean Air Act in November 1990. Not as comprehensive as the state legislation, the measure approved by Congress nonetheless indicates that an anti-pollution consensus exists in Washington — despite myriad competing special interests among members of the House and Senate.

The March 1989 plan also made it clear to politicians, the private sector and the general public that clean air — not merely cleaner air — had become the district's unequivocal goal for Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties. This was an historic change.

"The unstated position of the agency between 1977 (its first year of existence) and 1986 was 'we will try to improve the air quality, but Los Angeles is never going to have clean air,'" said Lents. " In 1987, however, we decided that would no longer be the case, that it is our mandate to have air in this basin that is healthy to breathe."

In December 1990 the district approved a draft that brought the AQMP into compliance with the recent California and federal air-quality regulations. This working document, which will be prepared and adopted by the district on June 30, 1991, is already being critiqued by business and environmentalists. According to language in the draft, "... all comments will be considered and incorporated into final plan as appropriate."

Stan Zwicker, director of air resources for McLaren/Hart, an environmental engineering consulting company with offices in Burbank and several other cities across the United States, believes that it is pointless for business to prolong the fight against the AQMD at a time when the district has become so bold.

Instead, Zwicker tells his clients — and repeats at various forums — that companies need to get ahead of the AQMD and develop their own anti-pollution strategies. He says they are listening.

"I want to see business and industry in California get smart about this," he explained. "The solution to the air pollution problem is not going to come from regulators imposing regulations. What I am trying to tell people is that here is a window of opportunity. If you get ahead of the curve, you will be able to make some suggestions that might be in your best interests in terms of making your operations run smoother."

As an example, he cited the aggressive response of the automobile and oil industries to the popular view of a few years ago that methanol was a "wonder fuel," both efficient and comparatively clean. "When the federal law came out it did not state that methanol was a cleaner-burning fuel," recalled Zwicker. "By taking a proactive stance, the oil and auto industry were able to change the way regulators thought about methanol."

He says there are also sound financial reasons for businesses writing their own environmental regulations. "If you are going to spend $100 million — and for some companies that is what we are talking about — it behooves a company to start planning now. That is what I see both the state and federal clean air acts leading to immediately."

"The sense I have is that many in industry realize that this is serious stuff," he went on, "that it is no longer just something to be taken lightly, that the public clearly wants clean air and they are willing to pay a certain amount for it. And companies are going to have to figure out how to comply."

"By taking a proactive stance, the oil and auto industry were able to change the way regulators thought about methanol."

— Stan Zwicker

Lents would not have his feelings hurt if business took on the task of regulating itself. There is, he notes, an unassailable logic in doing things that way.

"A business usually knows more about how to reduce its emissions than we do," he said. "We have a large staff, but compared to the 16,000 companies we work with, there is no way we can be knowledgeable about every one. And they can bring some really interesting ideas to the table."

One of these ideas — "emissions trading" — has already generated a great deal of talk both within industry and the AQMD's El Monte headquarters. This market-based program, which was discussed in a draft issued by the

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Environmental Protection Agency last summer, would allow firms to "buy and sell emissions credits, thereby providing flexibility and lowering the cost of meeting the targets," according to a report prepared for the California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance in November 1990. The council is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization composed of community leaders along with representatives of industry and organized labor.

Under the proposal, instead of the district writing emissions-reductions rules that apply across the board, individual companies would be "assigned" the current emissions they produce in the form of a permit. Each year their allowable emissions would need to be reduced somewhere between 5 and 7 percent, which corresponds to the AQMD's target for the entire basin. The district would audit every company to ensure compliance.

"To the extent that some businesses can reduce emissions more than the rules require," explained Lents, "they have a marketable commodity because another plant would take its excess emissions and buy that permit."

A report by the California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance, a group financed largely by major corporations, has determined that trading permits is a more cost-efficient way to clean the air: "Emission standards impose high costs for two reasons. First, the standards for different source categories typically are based upon the 'availability' and 'affordability' of control technologies, which creates wide variations among different source categories in the marginal costs of control. Second, uniform standards for the sources within a single category (e.g., electric power plants) lead to very different costs per ton controlled; the same [nitrogen oxide] standard may cost relatively little per ton for a large baseload power plant with a long remaining life, but much more for a smaller plant that is used only at peak times and will soon be scrapped. With trading, high-cost sources can buy additional emission reductions from low-cost sources."

It is a sign of the evolving relationship between the AQMD and business that Lents has called the plan "very interesting," and worthy of attention. "It would require a little bigger enforcement job, but a much simpler regulatory job on our part," said Lents. "Although the business community proposed this system, I think some of them are nervous because it still means emissions levels have to decrease."

"Emissions trading" is not the only idea recently pushed by business in the environmental arena. The Unocal Corporation, assisted by a $100,000 donation from the AQMD, announced a plan last spring to pay $700 each to scrap 7000 model 1970 and older automobiles and light trucks, which are smog the worst polluters on the road.

First Interstate Bank of California subsequently announced that it would offer special automobile loans to owners getting rid of their vehicles through this plan, known by the acronym SCRAP; in July, Ford Motor Company said it would donate $700,000 of its money to eliminate 1000 cars through the program.

SCRAP, which ended last fall, removed 10.7 million pounds of pollution from the air, according to Unocal. It was one of a series of programs the company offered as part of a broad anti-smog package.

Hughes and the AQMD split the cost of a $1.4 million project undertaken by the company to develop technology to reduce both volatile organic compounds, and chlorofluorocarbons, which are known to contribute to global warming and stratospheric ozone depletion. The project, completed this spring, included development of a sophisticated computer data base that allows engineers to obtain information on the environmental effects of 152 key solvents; testing of 11 paint spray guns; and research on 25 organic solders. Robert Seibold, project manager in the materials science department of Hughes, said the company and the AQMD may fund more of these kinds of projects in the future.

The desire among Southern Californians for clean air is as obvious as the dirty brown haze that still lingers over the basin. In that sense, the corporate executive riding to work in a limo and the person who walks to his or her job every day have something in common. This similarity, however, has been obscured in the face of years of suspicion, mistrust and anger that have existed between environmentalists and the private sector.

The AQMD, Hughes, Unocal and other companies are now saying it doesn't have to be that way. Over the next 20 years, Southern Californians will be able to judge whether a private sector-public sector alliance on the environment is indeed the best way to eliminate watery eyes and burning lungs.

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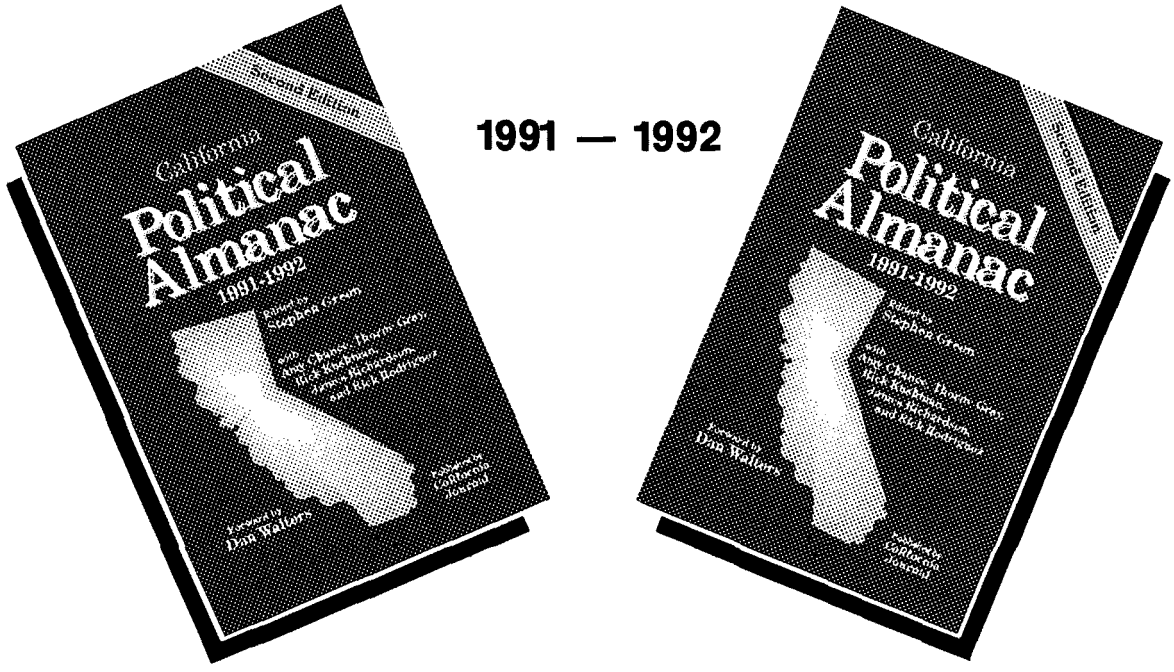

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Doing the RIGHT thing

The Sacramento Union's new look

By Michael Fitzgerald

The Sacramento Union newspaper — struggling for its financial survival — is engaged in a self-described publishing "experiment" that has some of its hard-line conservative supporters swelling with pride, but which has many, more-moderate, long-time readers reeling over seemingly biased stories, bitter, bombastic columns, and an alarming exodus of writers and editors to other newspapers.

The experiment?

Remaking the already admittedly conservative *Sacramento Union* into a late 20th Century *Spectator* — a newspaper filled with the kind of fiery, feisty partisan prose that marked newspapers of 100 years ago; the kind of newspaper that led crusades against child labor, slumlords, and patronage in government.

The Union's editor of eight months, Joseph Farah, is straightforward about his, and co-owner Dan Benvenuti Jr.'s, support for right-to-life Christian groups and their notions of traditional American and family values.

"We are unambiguously a pro-life newspaper," Farah says proudly. "We consider it a very, very important issue."

Besides being unambiguous in its opposition to abortion, the fiery, partisan prose published by *The Union* is unambiguous in its caustic criticisms aimed squarely at anything even remotely considered liberal. In the process, its news and editorial columns have taken on a new, arguably shrill voice. On the bottom of the front page, in a spot most newspapers reserve for a serious news story, *The Union* daily publishes a column written by radio talk-show host Rush Limbaugh that often has the same tonal quality as fingernails scraping along a blackboard.

In a column about Iraq's deliberate oil spill in the Persian Gulf, Limbaugh wrote, "Where are the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society and Earth First on this one? ... Perhaps they are devising a plausible way to blame the United States for this. Why not? According to them, it is the country responsible for every other evil and hardship in the world. ... The motivating force behind their existence is to destroy America."

And from another Limbaugh column under the headline, "Here's why some people can't stomach the media:"

"Immediately following each press conference, the media first condescendingly paraphrase and explain to its viewers or readers the meanings of what they had just heard. ...Then, while still purporting to report the facts, they insidiously began editorializing, most often in an effort to undermine the credibility of our [Persian Gulf] commanders."

Farah dismisses critics of Limbaugh's breathless style as simply "too liberal" to get Limbaugh's message. "And it's such a coup to have Rush doing an exclusive column for us." It's a coup that *The Union* works hard to get. In fact, the column itself is put together by the newspaper's own staff based on the day's radio talk show. Then it's sent to Limbaugh for his approval before publication.

On pages two and three, various columnists (including *Union* City Editor Mike Pottage, a former communications director with the Republican Assembly Caucus) routinely lambast Democratic politicians, liberals, gays, and State Superintendent of Schools Bill Honig and his wife Nancy — favorite targets in the state bureaucracy.

Although *Union* columnists and letters-to-the-editor writers have traditionally been given wide latitude in language, under Farah, the best anti-war demonstrators usually can hope to be called is "peaceniks." Gays can best hope to be referred to as homosexuals, though "sodomites" crept

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Michael Fitzgerald is a journalism professor at California State University, Sacramento.

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into a column by David Chilton, pastor of a Placerville church. Environmentalists are "wackos" and "eco-fruities." Pro-choice spokesman are now "pro-abortion."

Political columnist Roger Canfield took a swipe at Sacramento Mayor Anne Rudin in an October column headlined, "Homosexuals give Rudin good press." Rudin cancelled her home delivery subscription shortly after several other gay-bashing columns were printed.

"We took *The Union* for 30 years," Rudin said. "We wanted to see the conservative point of view. But it's gone way beyond that. There's a malignancy in some of the writing ... in the personal attacks on people. It's a misuse of the press."

State Senator Art Torres was clumsily maligned in a late January column about legislative staff cuts in the wake of Proposition 140.

"Senator Art Torres still has 38 professional staffers — more than three times the entire Senate Republican Caucus ... One wag suggests Torres ought to have used a couple of staffers as chauffeurs to avoid two drunken driving incidents," Canfield wrote.

The attacks — and the perception that *The Union's* coverage is shrinking to focus only on right-wing matters — have many other "wags" wondering if the paper is maintaining enough standing in the community to be a viable political force, or if it has become, as *Sacramento Bee* columnist Dan Walters says, "irrelevant." Walters is a *Union* alumnus, having switched his column to *The Bee* in 1984.

"*The Union* has always been an odd duck," Walters said. Historically, he said, its owners — including James Copley, who took over in the 1960s — have never had a "strategic concept" of how to make a newspaper profitable. "But now it's just not relevant either as a Sacramento city newspaper, or a capital paper. It's just kind of an oddity. There's no pretense of being a mainstream newspaper."

Joseph Farah

Dan Carson, Capitol bureau chief for the *San Diego Union*, calls *The Sacramento Union's* pitch-to-conservatives marketing strategy self-defeating. "Instead of working to broaden its appeal ... they have allowed the historic daily to become a mouthpiece for the fundamentalist Christian right, preoccupied with abortion, homosexuals and creationism."

Carson has watched *The Union's* downward spiral sadly. "I don't want to see them go out of business. But I don't see how they can keep going. This is a company town. You have a more sophisticated and interested readership than what they're pitching to."

The Union's official position on its finances is that it is "close" to breaking even. But staffing in the newsroom has been cut back to just eight reporters covering the city. On weekends, reporters often must be called in from their homes when emergencies flare up. Circulation is down to between 55,000 and 60,000, compared to 70,000 a year ago. Layoffs of personnel have continued as steadily as the newspaper's march to support its pet causes.

"The financial situation there is grave," Walters says. "Very grave."

The political makeover of *The Union* began slowly when the newspaper was purchased in late 1989 for a reported $30 million by developers Dan Benvenuti Jr. and David Kassis. Then-editor James Vesely left hurriedly after several reported disagreements with Benvenuti over story selection and emphasis. He concluded he was on a collision course with the conservative bent of the new owners. But his replacement, the feisty Farah, 37, took up the cudgel with the fervor of a traveling tent revivalist, rewriting the stylebook of *The Union* to banish the term "gays," and resetting the news agenda for the newspaper from its historical conservative outlook to the far right, where Farah says *The Union* is steadily carving out a "segment of loyal readers."

Farah had been an executive news editor with the now-defunct *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* and executive editor with a Glendale newspaper chain before joining *The Union*. A proud, vocal conservative, Farah sees himself as practically a lone voice in favor of family, the right to life, and traditional values in a liberal-dominated media. His strong positions are quickly making him a darling of the right. In November, he was lauded in a column by Reed Irvine of Accuracy in Media for making *The Union*, "unabashedly conservative."

Farah is also leading the conservative charge as director of a media panel called "Operation Spike," which looks to

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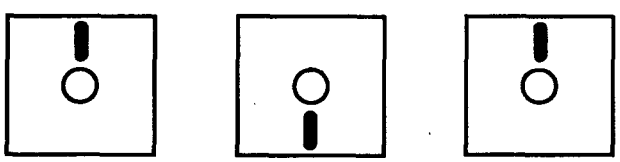

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provide a conservative counterpunch to "Operation Censored" — a project of Professor Carl Jensen of Sonoma State University. Operation Censored annually lists what Jensen and his panel (which includes Ben Bagdikian and Bill Moyers) consider the top 10 "underreported" news stories.

Farah's group, which includes Reed Irvine and *Washington Times* editor Arnaud de Borchgrave, listed its own top 10 underreported stories. Leading the list was "Ronald Reagan's contributions to world peace." Other choices included "how supply side economics really worked" and "why SDI is more necessary than ever."

Despite the conservative kudos, for the past few months, Farah — and *The Union* — have been the subject of unflattering portraits in *The Washington Post, The San Diego Union, Editor & Publisher* magazine and elsewhere. Most of the articles have honed in on the shift to conservative focus Farah is demanding daily of his entire news team, but the articles also point out management gaffes and the newspaper's dramatic dive in circulation. They also echo repeated complaints from exiting writers and editors that stories are being changed to reflect — and, they say, promote — a stiff-lipped conservative viewpoint.

In January, the *Columbia Journalism Review* printed an account by former staff writer Kathleen Salamon ("A former disgruntled staff member," Farah is quick to point out,) scorching the newspaper for tampering with its news columns to give conservative views nearly sole prominence, bashing gays, and making the anti-abortion issue the hub around which *Union* coverage revolves. In a sidebar article, titled "Why the liberal press is out to get us," Farah defended his — and *The Union's* — honor claiming the newspaper has been the victim of "reportorial hatchet jobs."

"Yes, *The Sacramento Union* stands for certain principles. We passionately support them in our editorials, columns and cartoons," Farah wrote. "We take strong positions, for instance, against abortion on demand, excessive government spending and special rights based on sexual proclivities. ...It is simply untrue ... that our strong point of view has destroyed the standards of balance and fairness in our news columns."

Farah's passionate support for the right-to-life movement led him to the podium of an anti-abortion rally January 19th at the State Capitol where he wound up an hour of pulpit-pounding anti-abortion speeches declaring for the 2000 or so demonstrators that *The Sacramento Union* offers them a "conservative alternative" to *The Sacramento Bee*. Farah drew loud, long cheers when he said *The Union* is the only newspaper with the courage to accurately describe the National Organization for Women as a "radical feminist" group. And in what is becoming a recurring theme in Farah's speeches, he urged the crowd to subscribe to *The Union* — and ask their neighbors to do the same — to ensure that "their voice" would remain publishing.

Union Publisher James Smith says Farah's activism is simply a throwback to the times when editors were passionate and crusaded for what they — and the owner of the newspaper — believed in. "That was before we had this great, gray corporate journalism of today," Smith says. "I like what Joe is doing and so do our readers."

Smith, a 40-year veteran of newspapers, including several years as general manager of *The Sacramento Bee*, is on the lecture circuit himself, selling *The Union's* born-again conservativism — and occasionally subscriptions, he says — to Kiwanis clubs, associations of retired pilots, and generally safe conservative audiences who are giving him loud

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The "new" journalism?

The Sacramento Union's sudden shift to crusading comes at a time when many journalists are reexamining "objectivity" — the basic professional model for journalistic style writing since the turn of the century.

In the summer 1990 edition of the *Gannett Center Journal*, a number of environmental writers and editors suggest that the destruction of the environment has progressed to where it is too late to follow standard objective journalism by presenting facts — and then letting readers decide what needs to be done. The journalists suggest they should cut through the smokescreens presented by government, public-relations agencies and politicians to present clear, strong conclusions about what needs to be done to solve environmental problems.

Other critics — including Christopher Lasch, writing in *News, Inc.* in December 1990 — lament the blandness of today's newspapers which Lasch says has turned people away from reading.

"What Democracy requires is public debate, not information," Lasch says. "But as things now stand the press generates information in abundance and nobody pays any attention.... Much of the press, in its eagerness to inform the public, has become a conduit for the equivalent of junk mail."

His solution is for the press to provide the equivalent of a "town meeting," in which all voices can be heard.

Sacramento Union editor Joseph Farah says that's exactly what *The Union* is doing now — except his newspaper is providing a meeting place for the conservative voices he says are generally without a forum.

"But I object to reporters having a political agenda," Farah says. "I'm critical of that at any time."

— *Michael Fitzgerald*

applause. He says he's doing it in the hope of convincing people *The Union's* management is sincere in maintaining a voice for conservative people in the capital area.

"We don't want Sacramento to turn into a San Francisco with those influences. This is a family town and *The Union* wants to promote that," he says.

Farah says his goal is to present a newspaper that's fresh, feisty and anything but bland. But he says he will keep his reporters objective and the stories "balanced." But the paper, "as an entity, certainly can have an agenda," he says. "The balance model is good for the industry of newspapers but not necessarily good for readers."

Farah also agrees that *The Union* tends to select stories that are of special interest to its special audience but says such story choices are well within journalistic bounds. "Our stories are unbiased. Our story choice is just another form of editing," he said.

The Union has been a struggling second best in the Capitol for many years, living in the shadow of the powerful *Sacramento Bee*. In 1967, when the paper was owned by James Copley, the present, four-story Capitol Mall building was built with much higher hopes. Copley wanted a strong voice in the state Capitol, Smith says, especially with his friend, Ronald Reagan, about to become governor. By 1974, when Copley died, the paper was nearly closed down for non-payment of its bills, but was bailed out by James P. McGoff, later accused of secretly obtaining the purchase money (approximately $6 million) from the government of South Africa. McGoff was charged with being an agent of the South African government but the charges were dismissed because the statute of limitations had expired. McGoff, in turn, was slowly bought out — or bailed out — by Pennsylvania financier Richard Mellon Scaife in the late 1970s.

For a brief time, *The Union* watched its circulation climb to within 40,000 newspapers of that of *The Bee*. But by 1983 *The Union* was embroiled in a scandal over its circulation when it was found that the newspaper had cooked its books to the tune of more than 16,000 newspapers. Advertisers were outraged and the newspaper paid more than $2 million in civil penalties and restitution to advertisers.

As soon as it was purchased by Benvenuti and Kassis, the two began to scale back the operation to cut costs. Staff was laid off. The paper was redesigned back to a traditional, full-size newspaper after 18 months in a tabloid format. The newspaper's operation was then compacted into the bottom two floors of the building. The upper two stories are leased out to the state.

Benvenuti says he will eventually move *The Union* to a new plant on Richards Boulevard and purchase a new, smaller press so the newspaper can add to its revenues through lucrative commercial printing contracts. Dropping the number of days of publication back from seven days per week to a less-frequent *Union* is also possible.

Publisher Smith says that despite dire predictions, *The Union* is "the closest it's been to self-supporting in 20 years. I don't know why everyone keeps predicting our demise. Danny [Benvenuti] isn't going to let that happen. And we have other interests behind us to help, too."

In January, circulation climbed up nearly 2000 subscribers, Smith says, a tribute to both the efforts of some reorganization in the circulation department and the apparent heeding of *The Union's* conservative message out in the community.

And some signs are popping up in odd places that the special audience of *The Union* that Farah, Smith and Benvenuti are counting on, may be listening. In a newsletter mailed to a Sacramento Christian home-schooling group of several hundred members, readers were urged to support the newspaper.

"Have you read *The Sacramento Union* lately? If not, please do so and you'll be pleasantly surprised, if not thrilled that such an excellent newspaper is available to us. *The Union* is a pro-family, pro-business, anti-abortion newspaper. Let us support a local paper that can influence Sacramento for the good by subscribing and advertising in *The Union*. As Christian home-schoolers, it can be our "voice" in the community."

Farah, weary of reading generally negative reviews of his newspaper, agrees.

"If we have time to let this experiment run its course, I think it will be successful.

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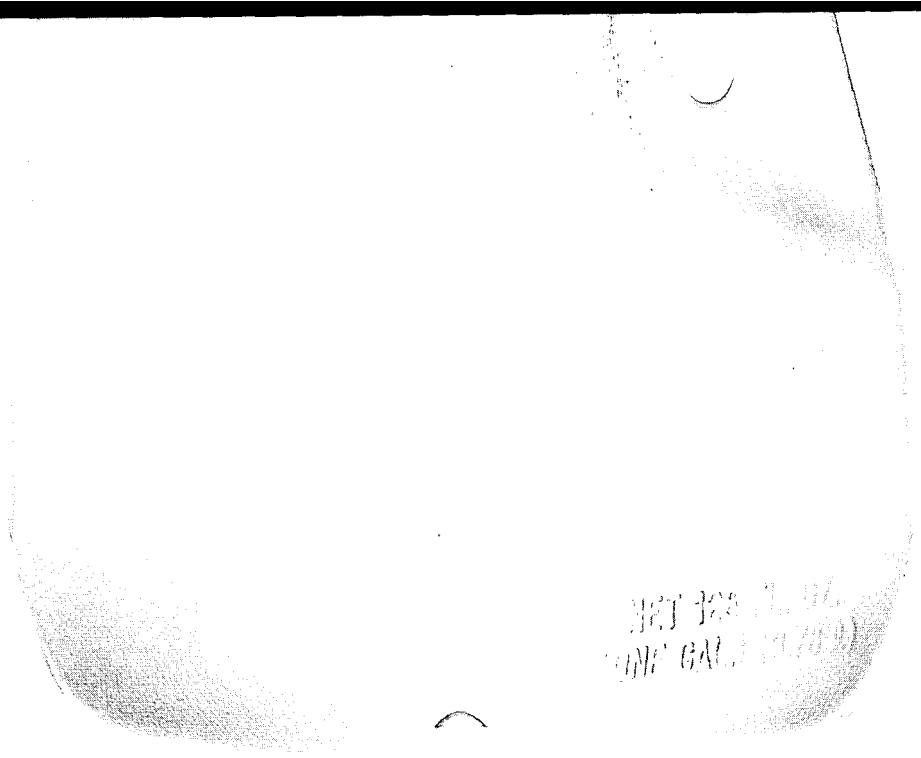

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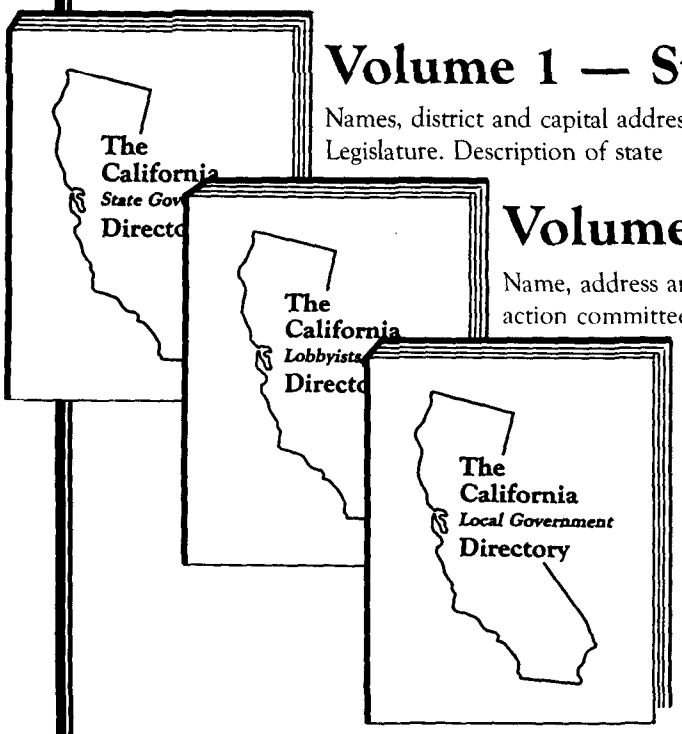

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ROSTRUM

Textbooks

The article on textbook selection (see "California's history textbooks: Do they offend?" *CJ*, March 1991) distorts a complex issue and gives a biased slant to the state's history/social-science textbook adoption process. The article states that materials were adopted for political reasons. In fact, they were adopted in spite of intense political pressure to reject them. Allegations that "state officials" felt obliged to approve materials insults the outstanding teachers and other scholars appointed to the evaluation panel. You also fail to mention the teachers, scholars and parents — from all ethnic groups — who repeatedly spoke in strong support of the books.

Further, the article incorrectly asserts that a school district may not use state funds to buy books that are not state-adopted. Districts may spend up to 30 percent of their state funds for other materials, and up to 100 percent if they petition that alternatives are better for their students.

An even larger issue is the national debate over multicultural perspective and what it means to be an American. These issues were addressed in depth by the scholars and teachers who developed the history/social-science framework.

Without a common core of knowledge for all students, we perpetuate a lack of cultural empathy and respect for others with differing appearances, languages, religious beliefs and cultural values. Districts such as Los Angeles and Long Beach have approved the new state-adopted materials, as have over 100 other districts. These textbooks represent a giant step forward.

BILL HONIG
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

As a social-studies teacher and a member of the state's Instructional Materials Evaluation Panel (IMEP), I feel your story on textbook selection misses the mark when it attacks the textbook-selection process that approved a new series of books by Houghton Mifflin and an eighth-grade textbook by Holt, Reinhart and Winston.

I was an active participant in that review process, and it was wrong for your story to indicate that the process was a "done deal." To be reviewed favorably by the IMEP, textbooks had to undergo unprecedented scrutiny and evaluation.

California's struggle to implement a new history/social science curriculum has been hailed nationally as a benchmark in education reform. The California framework is a vast departure from the "expanding horizons" approach to teaching social science at the elementary level, which focused on a child's family and community but with a limited historical perspective that fostered a limited world view in later grades. The new framework places history and geography at the center of the curriculum for every grade level and each course of study.

To comply with this new framework, publishers had to develop completely new textbooks. The framework requires all students to study three years of world history, incorporating a multicultural perspective and a recognition by teachers that history reflects the experiences of people from diverse ethnic, religious and racial groups. In total, the California framework contains 17 distinguishing characteristics, three goals and 12 curriculum strands that must be constant in every grade.

Publishers had three years to produce their materials. Only one — Houghton Mifflin — chose to produce a full textbook series. Nine companies submitted individual textbooks.

The initial selection process began with an intensive review by the IMEP, which was well balanced in gender and ethnic diversity and representative of California's population. IMEP members were given guidelines to follow during their individual, two-and-one-half month review of submissions. We were not allowed to contact publishers during that time and were encouraged to report any contact made by publishers to us. IMEP members then met for an entire week to reach some consensus on materials to be recommended to the Curriculum Commission. Each of our sessions was monitored by the state Board of Education, the Curriculum Commission, Department of Education and the news media. At the end of that week, only the Houghton Mifflin series and only the Holt, Reinhart and Winston textbook adequately met the required standards. These were recommended to a subcommittee of the Curriculum Commission, which then held public hearings. There was both criticism and praise at these hearings from diverse groups. Few journalists, however, reported on the praise. The subcommittee also called upon scholars to help make corrections wherever errors of fact or interpretation occurred.

Finally, the commission recommended that the State Board of Education adopt only books recommended by the IMEP and its subcommittee, knowing that these books had been scrutinized like no other books before them. The state board unanimously approved the books — a decision later validated after another extensive review process by the Los Angeles Unified School District, which approved the same materials.

As a result, California public-school students will be better prepared for their roles as knowledgeable citizens in a fast-changing society. To imply that these books were approved "over vehement protests" by various ethnic groups denies the fact that the books were also approved by representatives of those same ethnic groups who served on the IMEP, the Curriculum Commission and the Board of Education. With its new approach to teaching social studies, California has taken a bold step toward meeting the needs of a multicultural society.

RUBEN ZEPEDA
President, California Social
Science Association
Los Angeles

Your article on textbook selection covers a lot of territory, but not in depth nor with accuracy. You ignore all the testimony favoring the adoption process and make it appear as though there was a monolith of opposition to the materials. Yet panels of classroom teachers, scholars and others with expertise — including members of minority groups — found that the materials did meet California's nationally acclaimed history/social-science framework. Not perfect, but a quantum leap better than what is currently available. For once, our kids and their teachers won. All students will benefit from a factual, multicultural experience, presented as "our" history and not "my" history.

DANIEL M. CHERNOW
Curriculum Development and
Supplemental Materials Commission

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Honig and education l

By Wi

After six months of guerrilla warfare, the State Board of Education appears to be emerging as the winner over State Superintendent of Public Instruction Bill Honig in a battle about who has the authority to make and carry out state educational policy.

In a series of close votes, the board decided at its March meeting to break off negotiations with Honig and took the first steps toward a lawsuit that a majority of board members hope will make it clear that they, not Honig, have the final say over what happens in the public schools.

The fight is reminiscent of the 1960's skirmishing between state schools' chief Max Rafferty, a conservative Republican, and a State Board of Education that was dominated by liberal Democrats, but this time the ideological center of gravity has reversed.

Honig is a liberal Democrat and the board president is Joseph D. Carrabino, a pugnacious conservative Republican from the San Fernando Valley who once taught in the Graduate School of Management at UCLA. Carrabino holds the dubious distinction of being the only tenured University of California professor to have been demoted in at least 25 years.

Under Carrabino's leadership, the usually passive state board is seeking more authority over the elementary and secondary school budget — both its preparation and review of how the money is spent. They also want their own staff to review actions taken by Honig and his aides; approval of policy directives before they are sent to the state's 1000 school districts; and the right to approve top appointments in the Department of Education.

These demands have been punctuated by Carrabino's repeated charges that the 1200-employee department is being mismanaged and that some of the billions of dollars that pass through the department each year are disap-

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William Trombley is a Capitol correspondent for the Los Angeles Times.

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LYARD
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square off over power

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pearing into the wrong pockets.

"I know there's corruption going on," Carrabino said in an interview last fall, as the dispute with Honig was building. "It's going to surface."

But it has not surfaced. The board president has yet to produce any evidence of corruption or misuse of federal or state education dollars, prompting Honig and his supporters to accuse Carrabino of McCarthyism.

After losing key votes at the March board meeting, Honig said the board had been "hijacked by right-wing ideologues," referring in particular to Carrabino and to board member Joe Stein, a Southern California industrial real estate broker.

Honig pointed out that most of the $25 billion in planned spending for public schools this year has been appropriated to local school districts according to formulas approved by the Legislature or the federal government. The only discretionary money is to be found in the department's own budget of $112.5 million. Department of Education officials contend that spending is subject to at least half a dozen federal and state audits each year, making it unlikely that funds could be misappropriated.

However, these claims have not blunted Carrabino's attacks on Honig as an "education czar" who "runs a one-man show ... without adequate checks and balance."

The board president's penchant for sweeping charges and his talent for personal invective make him a tough opponent. During a negotiating session with Honig last December, Carrabino objected to the quality of outside educational consultants the department was hiring.

"There isn't a consulting company in the school business that's worth a shit," he said. "They don't have analytical ability. It's all light-weight stuff."

"Joe, you're a difficult man to deal with," Honig replied. "You make these broad, broad statements. How do you deal with them?"

At the same meeting, Carrabino

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said, "The average board member can't balance a checkbook," and, later, "There aren't two people on this board who understand what a budget is."

Despite these expressions of contempt for his colleagues, Carrabino has been able to command a majority among the 11 State Board of Education members, all appointees of former Governor George Deukmejian. They re-elected him board president for a second year in January and have supported his efforts to wrest power from Honig.

However, only a bare majority of six supported Carrabino on the most important of the votes at the March meeting — the move to break off the power-sharing negotiations with Honig — and it is not clear how long he will be able to maintain that majority.

Some board members are increasingly annoyed by Carrabino's "shoot-from-the-hip" style. Governor Pete Wilson's appointees are likely to be more moderate than some of those named by Deukmejian. And Carrabino's own term expires next January.

Carrabino's combative ways, perhaps the result of his Brooklyn boyhood, got him into trouble at UCLA, where he was a member of the faculty for almost 40 years — long before he joined the State Board of Education.

Former colleagues in the Graduate School of Management say Carrabino did little research after obtaining tenure as a professor. Instead, they say, he ran a successful campus program for business executives, built up a lucrative management consulting business and fought with a succession of department chairmen over his teaching assignments.

Court documents show that Carrabino was demoted from full professor to associate professor for refusing to teach an undergraduate management course in the 1992 spring academic quarter.

Carrabino says he was better qualified to teach graduate courses but that Donald Erlenkotter, then chairman of the school's management department, assigned him the undergraduate class "just to be spiteful," knowing it would interfere with Carrabino's outside consulting activities.

But this argument did not persuade UCLA Chancellor Charles E. Young, who recommended that he be demoted, or University of California President David P. Gardner, who followed Young's advice, or the UC Board of Regents, which approved the disciplinary action. The Regents' computerized records, which date back to 1965, indicate that Carrabino is the only tenured professor to have been demoted anywhere in the nine-campus UC system in that time.

Carrabino sued to regain his full professorship but lost in both Superior Court and the state Court of Appeal. The California Supreme Court refused to hear a further appeal.

The board president still believes he was right in the dispute but now thinks he should not have sued the university.

"That was a big mistake," Carrabino said in a recent interview. "I should have dropped it and forgotten all about it. I was foolish to think you could get a fair shake" from the UC disciplinary system. "It was a big mistake in judgment. I paid a hell of a price emotionally for trying to challenge the university's arrogant system."

But one of his fellow faculty members sees it differently.

"Joe is not incompetent at all. He just didn't want to do what he was supposed to do," said this professor, who has known Carrabino for many years but did not want to be identified. "He's always been a maverick and he challenged the system and lost. It's just that simple."

When Carrabino, now 66, retired as an active faculty member in 1989, he regained the title of full professor, *emeritus*, as part of a deal that UCLA administrators refuse to discuss.

Although former Governor Deukmejian was a member of the UC Board of Regents when the board upheld the disciplinary action against Carrabino in 1983, three years later he appointed the demoted professor to the State Board of Education, which sets policy in some areas for the state's almost five million youngsters in kindergarten through 12th grade.

Carrabino said he was appointed as a "booby prize," after failing to get a job he wanted more — state Director of Industrial Relations. He has applied for the same position in the Wilson Administration but is not thought to be a leading candidate.

After Carrabino joined the board in July 1986, he said, "The real shock comes — I go to a couple of meetings and I find out this board has no authority, no staff, no money for travel, no nothing."

The board's budget this year is $566,000 — about one-half of one percent of the total Department of Education budget. The staff consists of Executive Director Tom Bogetich and three secretaries who, technically, all work for Honig.

Until recently, board members had no offices or telephones and frequently were forced to conduct board business from pay phones in the lobby of the Department of Education building.

Elected board president in January 1990, Carrabino set out to correct these deficiencies. He persuaded a majority of his colleagues to support a series of proposals that would increase the board's authority significantly.

At last September's board meeting, without informing Honig, Carrabino and his allies proposed by-law changes to implement these proposals.

"The board used to be very passive and Bill Honig, who is anything but passive, fulled the void."
— Marlon McDowell

The board's action probably was not legal, but Howard Dickstein, a special counsel later hired by the board, summed up the frustration that led to the September vote when he said some members "feel they've been left in the dark — they don't know what's happening in a department they're supposed to be the governing body of."

Honig objected to the board's September actions loudly. "I think it smacks of politics," he said at the time. "They didn't tell us anything about it. They bushwhacked us."

In truth, no one is sure where the lines of authority are drawn in determining state policy in kindergarten through 12th grade.

The state Constitution limits the State Board of Education to approval of textbooks and other curriculum materials in kindergarten through 8th grade, but some state laws say the board should determine broad policies that the elected Superintendent of Public Instruction should carry out. Other laws give the superintendent most of the authority.

There have been conflicting opinions from different attorneys general over the years.

In practice, the superintendent generally has run the show, without much board participation, but controversy flares when the schools' chief is

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from one political party, board members from another.

In the face of Honig's heated opposition and the doubtful legality of their September actions, board members retreated. Instead of insisting on the by-law changes that would have increased their power, they delegated Carrabino and Stein to try to negotiate a settlement with Honig.

Honig's willingness to negotiate was surprising to some, but the superintendent was in a weakened political position. After eight years in office, his quick-witted but sometimes abrasive style has alienated some important legislators. A group of disgruntled Department of Education employees and former employees has been leaking damaging allegations about Honig to *The Sacramento Union* and other newspapers.

Honig was embarrassed when it became known that his wife Nancy has been operating a highly successful parent-involvement program called the Quality Education Project out of the Honig residence in San Francisco. There were suggestions, not proven, that Honig was using his personal influence, and that of the department, to promote this program.

Whatever the motivation, the talks began. After several weeks of negotiations that were marked by sharp exchanges between Carrabino and Honig, lawyers for the two sides produced a "memo of understanding" that expanded the board's role significantly but fell short of Carrabino's original demands.

The agreement involved the board in setting budget priorities, allowed board members to conduct full-scale critiques of up to three department programs each year and also allowed the board to review major policy directives before they are sent to local school districts.

However, the proposed agreement did not provide the board with a separate attorney and staff, nor did it permit the close budget oversight and other performance reviews that Carrabino and his allies were seeking.

Honig said he "gave up a lot of authority I didn't have to give up," in order to reach agreement.

Dickstein, the board's special counsel, urged the board to accept the "memo of understanding," at least for a trial period. Dickstein said the board had valid legal claims to more authority than they presently exercise but warned that the courts might not agree with him and that a lawsuit might result in less, not more, board authority.

The Wilson administration also was hoping for an agreement.

"It is not in the best interests of the kids of this state to have this dispute continue," said Maureen DiMarco, Wilson's secretary for child development and education. "We hope they can resolve it."

But the deal fell apart at the March meeting, when the board voted 6-4 (one member was absent) to reject the "memo of understanding" and ordered Honig to draw up policies and procedures that would give the board more authority over budget and other matters.

Honig said he would not do so and the groundwork was laid for a board lawsuit.

Carrabino was pleased. "I'm relieved," he said after the meeting. "I know we're on the right track."

But Honig was furious. In addition to charging that the board has been captured by "right-wing ideologues," he called Carrabino a "blowhard" who is carrying out a "personal political vendetta" against the superintendent.

Now the controversy begins a long journey through the courts, with unpredictable results.

Whatever the outcome, the relationship between the superintendent and the board probably has been changed permanently.

"The board used to be very passive and Bill Honig, who is anything but passive, filled the void," said Marion McDowell, board vice president. "Now Honig is making more of an effort to keep the board informed and we're speaking up more. It's a healthier relationship."

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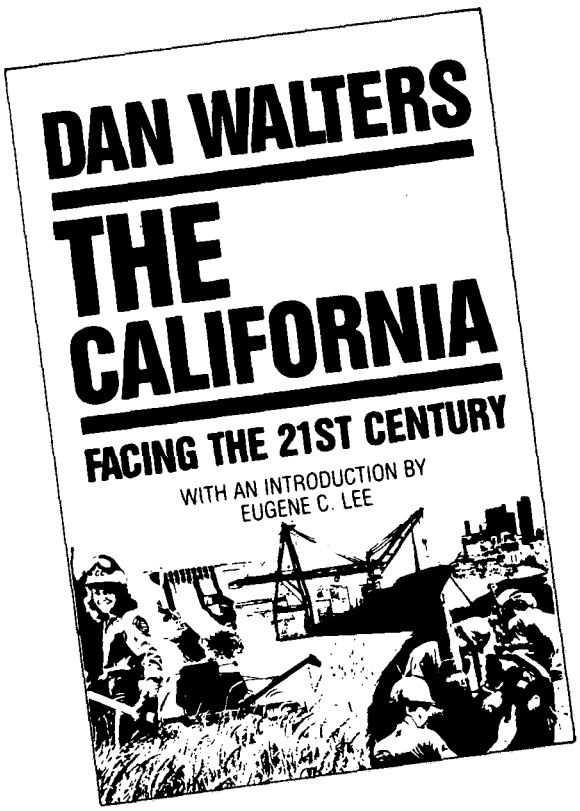

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Photo by Christopher Ross

Minorities prosper on low-tech farming

By Christopher Ross

"We believe that small farming is the wave of the future in California — labor intensive and family oriented. It's good for the land, the environment, and the economy. It will take a lot of convincing, and the California situation is not going to be replicable in the Midwest. But in the California environment we are confident that this is the answer."

— C.P. Zachariadis, Executive Director of the Washington D.C.-based Association for Community Based Education.

The notion is elegantly simple, yet radical in its rejection of conventional wisdom: There's a role, still, for the small family farmer, and that role can increasingly be filled by members of California's diverse minority community.

In the Salinas Valley, about 180,000 acres are planted in vegetables annually, worth $700 million. The dominant land-use pattern of large fields managed with chemical fertilizers and herbicides is practiced by the large corporations who dominate California agriculture in the Central Valley. Yet the Association for Community Based Education (ACBE), which has a number of programs to assist minority businesses, identified 600 farmers in the Salinas Valley who work less than 20 acres and gross under $150,000 per year. Half of these are minority farmers with Mexican backgrounds.

According to Zachariadis, "We were overwhelmed by the demand for training by minorities who love the land and want to remain on it. But there is a tremendous difficulty reaching small farmers — their advisers are already stretched to the limit. It's a large state and not enough staff." Because minority farmers usually have smaller and more marginal plots of land, as well as different agricultural practices and cultural biases, it takes a different approach to help them. Now, at the association's Rural Development Center (RDC) in Salinas, 25 to 28 minority families are each leasing and farming two- to five-acre plots for three years. In the process, they are learning how to use their traditional

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Christopher Ross is a freelance writer from Reno, Nevada.

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Photo by Christopher Ross

agricultural practices with other low-tech ideas, both new and old, to successfully compete with California's agribusiness giants.

Edio Vallejo has a strawberry farm near Salinas. In his spare time he works a plot at the Rural Development Center, swinging a hoe or guiding a rototiller. He says, "Yes, pesticides kill the pests, but they also kill us! I have 12 children —I want them to grow up healthy. Here I can learn to grow my strawberries without poison. I'll spray them this year with seaweed to repel the birds so that they go after the bugs instead. It's a purely traditional technique that I brought from Mexico, but I need more technical advice and experience with organic fertilizers and appropriate tools in this area. Here I get that."

Jose Lopez, also from Mexico, agrees. "I've been in Salinas for some years, struggling to grow my crops organically because I'm concerned about the bad things that come into our environment and affect my family. We all have families. I've been farming organically and I feel that the quality is just as good, but I have problems marketing. I'm not tapping into the right markets, which is sometimes demoralizing, but RDC is helping me learn to get my crops to the right places."

Richard Smith, the University of California Agricultural Extension Service Small Farm Adviser for the area, concedes that, "It's hard for small growers to get a good price in the marketplace. We have to distinguish their product by special crops or special quality, or by growing it organically."

Although there were a few small programs in California that worked with Southeast Asian immigrants, until the Rural Development Center opened in 1985, there was no help specifically for Hispanic minorities. (At that time, according to the Center's Director Mike Gonzales, the site was "a place where people came to dump trash.")

In South America, however, almost every country has non-government centers for education and technical assistance to peasant farmers. From these various organizations have come many of the people who now work at the RDC, including Gonzales, who was previously involved with the import and export of vegetables in Venezuela and Guatemala. The RDC now offers diverse programs which also include many people and families of the community who are not actually farming at the center. They come for classes in farm accounting, marketing, business management, and record keeping, some of which may be taken for college credit through the local community college. In addition, instructors with the California Regional Occupation Program provide classes leading to certification in equipment maintenance and repair. Night classes in literacy and English are offered on demand. There is a five-month greenhouse production and technology program which uses two acres of on-site greenhouses to teach the commercial production of roses and other cut flowers.

But the heart of the center is the 28 participants in the "experiential training program in family farming." For their first year, participants (all of whom are farming their own operations nearby) farm two acres of center land each at nominal rent, while attending classes there on production methods. The next year, they move to five-acre parcels at higher rent, and attend marketing and financing classes. During their third year, they rent center land at the market rate, which is $400 to $600 per acre for land that costs up to $14,000 an acre to purchase nearby. This land is farmed independently. "Students" buy their own seeds, chemicals, and irrigation electricity, and use the center's (limited) equipment, soil lab and library.

The ultimate goal, according to Gonzales, is to improve the farmers' social-economic status. "We don't want to turn them all into farmers. It's very difficult to be a farmer now. We want them to be able to survive by themselves without waiting for seasonal work as broccoli pickers or something; they can't do that once they're 40 years old.

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But you can't just pile them into a classroom and say, 'This is how we will market our crop.' Our growers here aren't students and it's difficult to treat them as students."

But there are plenty of students around the center, and their professors, too. Although area farm advisors and Extension Service people are conducting research in herbicide reduction, pest management, and other problems, the majority of the considerable experimental programs done at the RDC since 1987 are by the graduate students and teachers of the Division of Biological Control at UC Berkeley, most of whom are minorities themselves. Prior to this, although the University of California system was heavily involved with agriculture research, it had attracted criticism for its reluctance to direct assistance to the needs of small farmers and minorities. But that is changing. Miguel Altieri, who is from Chile, is the co-leader of the University's project to assist small, resource-poor farmers of the valley with low-input technologies. When UC started, "The agronomists told us 'no way can you grow tomatoes and squash without chemicals,' but we did it the first year. Now, in our third year, we are getting better yields than we would with chemicals. Our goal is to build on traditional farming practices, not radical agriculture — to reduce input and meet the needs of small, poor farmers by optimizing instead of modifying the landscape."

"This is a totally different context, these little plots with Mexican farmers in the middle of these huge farm businesses. It's completely surrealistic, but it works!"

Above all, it's a way for the teachers to learn, too. The UC programs at the Center began with on-farm surveys to describe existing cultivation techniques, and to identify biological and socio-economic constraints on production and resource use among the participants. The surveys gave the researchers insights into the causes of the problems they faced. They then set up in-field experiments to evaluate possible solutions, such as different weeding regimes, new varieties, natural fertilizers, and such traditional Mexican techniques as intercropping (planting tomatoes and zucchini, for example, together), and windbreak rows of taller plants in broccoli patches.

As the surveys delved into each participant's knowledge of crop systems, it was soon obvious that land and labor could be used more intensively, production costs lowered, and organic methods used in place of chemicals. The integration of the farmers' and researchers' knowledge suggested many modifications which have improved energy efficiency and environmental benefits as well as the produce. Now other field experiments test new varieties, different planting densities and timings, crop rotation, and other techniques. The results have surprised everybody. The cooperative approach is a clear success.

While indirect benefits included reduced soil erosion and chemical pollution with better water conservation, there are direct, immediate economic results as well.

As farmers and researchers perfect the combinations of new and old systems of intercropping, weed and pest management, they are maximizing yields as well as production diversity while reducing production costs. With the use of natural fertilizers and biological control, the cost of fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides, and the energy used to produce and apply them is reduced or eliminated. The same techniques reduce water use, and the energy to pump it. Hand labor is generally substituted for mechanical culture and harvest.

Energy conservation is an area where small farms are especially efficient compared to large, when they are set up properly. To this end, the California Energy Commission, in March 1989, awarded $66,500 to UC Berkeley for a two-year demonstration project, a grant likely to be renewed in 1991. The project is to identify existing crop systems used by small farmers in the Salinas Valley under various levels of inputs. Energy auditing of the different levels will focus both on the energy requirements for purchased input production, such as fertilizer and herbi-

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cides, and on direct energy use involved in tillage, planting, irrigation, and pest control. The program is estimated to result in 20 percent reduction of electricity use, a 40 percent reduction in fertilizer, 80 percent reduction of insecticide use, and 70 percent reduction in fungicide.

The money came from the state's $5 million Farm Energy Assistance Program, established by SB 1145 (sponsored by Senator Henry Mello) to support energy conserving farming practices technically and financially. The program, in turn, is financed by the Petroleum Violation Escrow Account, established by the federal government from fines paid by major oil companies for overcharging consumers from 1973 to 1981. According to Mello, the Rural Development Center "is a very critical project. ... I believe this specific project exemplifies the intent of this legislation to aid California's efforts to remain strong and competitive in the agricultural industry."

But it's a very small step. Last year 60 families applied; this year more than 100 applications are expected. There are openings for only eight. As Gonzales says, "We can't make them all farmers. But we can make them other things — entrepreneurs or mechanics. It multiplies — we give these skills to the head of the household and soon he has cousins and uncles doing it. But it takes a lot of personal hands-on work ... how to plant the crop, market it, do the books and everything else."

According to ACBE Director Zachariadis, the Center's work is unique "because of the orientation towards the combination of sustainable and conventional methods on small farms, and our use of UC expertise. I hope that at some point our work will have impact through the demonstration of how powerful this work is in dealing with poverty and disenfranchisement in environmentally sound ways. But it will take a long time."

The Center is a start. To Marta Astier, a UC grad student and the university's project coordinator, there is no doubt the program is a success. Gesturing at the huge expanses of corporation-farmed fields that totally surround the tiny RDC, she says: "This is a totally different context, these little plots with Mexican farmers in the middle of these huge farm businesses. It's completely surrealistic, but it works!"

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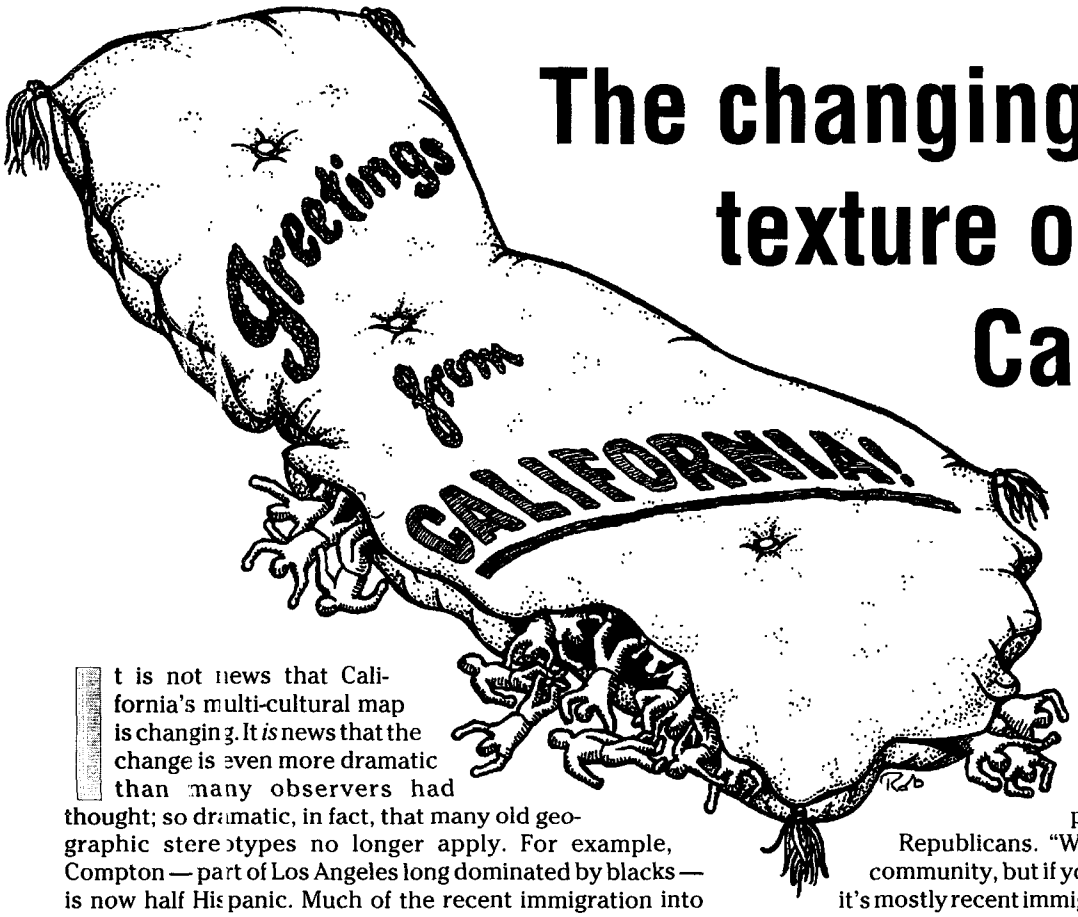
The 1990 Census

The changing texture of California



By Tung Yin

It is not news that California's multi-cultural map is changing. It *is* news that the change is even more dramatic than many observers had thought; so dramatic, in fact, that many old geographic stereotypes no longer apply. For example, Compton — part of Los Angeles long dominated by blacks — is now half Hispanic. Much of the recent immigration into another predominantly black community, Watts, is from Mexico. And Anglos have fallen from two-thirds to barely half the population in just 10 years.

California's ethnic diversity was given shape and texture by preliminary figures from the 1990 census. Among other things, those figures show that the state's Hispanic and Asian populations increased dramatically over the past decade, together accounting for more than half of the state's seven-million-person increase.

The state's 7.7 million Hispanics are the largest minority group, accounting for more than a quarter of the population — up from 19 percent a decade ago. While the Hispanic population increased by 67 percent, the Asian population grew by nearly 100 percent, from 1.4 million to 2.7 million.

The figures are based on the Census Bureau's 1980 and 1990 data and are subject to revision through July 1991. While only the preliminary data are available for use in the on-going process of drawing new legislative and congressional districts, political consultants are already forming explanations and predictions.

Jose Rodriguez of the Association of Bay Area Governments said the recent immigration reform may have affected the count because it allowed illegal and undocumented aliens to stay in the state and settle.

This growth has resulted in large migrations of Hispanics to unexpected areas in Los Angeles, according to Tony Quinn, a former reapportionment consultant for the Republicans. "Watts is thought to be a black community, but if you go to Watts today, you'll find it's mostly recent immigration from Mexico," he noted. Compton, for example, was traditionally predominately black, but by 1990 was almost half Hispanic. "That sets up a potential conflict for political leadership between blacks and Hispanics," Quinn added.

However, the Hispanic population is not localized to Southern California; Monterey and San Benito Counties, just south of San Francisco Bay, are 33.6 percent and 45.8 percent Hispanic, respectively. Rodriguez attributed the size of Hispanic population to agriculture. "There has always been a Hispanic presence in terms of agricultural workers," he said.

The number of Asians also grew, from 6.1 percent of the population to 9.1 percent. Because the Asian population is so spread out and not concentrated, "other than San Francisco [28.4 percent Asian], I think Asian political behavior will be close to that of whites," Quinn said.

While whites are still the majority racial group, they now account for only slightly more than half of the state, compared to two-thirds in 1980.

Blacks dropped from 7.5 percent in 1980 to 7 percent because their numbers did not increase as much as the rest of the country. Although the nation averages 12.1 percent blacks, Clifford Collins, director of voter registration for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), said that much of the black population was concentrated in southern states such as Mississippi and Louisiana, both of which average more than 30 percent black.

While much of the growth of the minority groups occurred in the large urban areas such as Los Angeles, San

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Tung Yin writes for California News Service, a project of the University of California at Berkeley Graduate School of Journalism.

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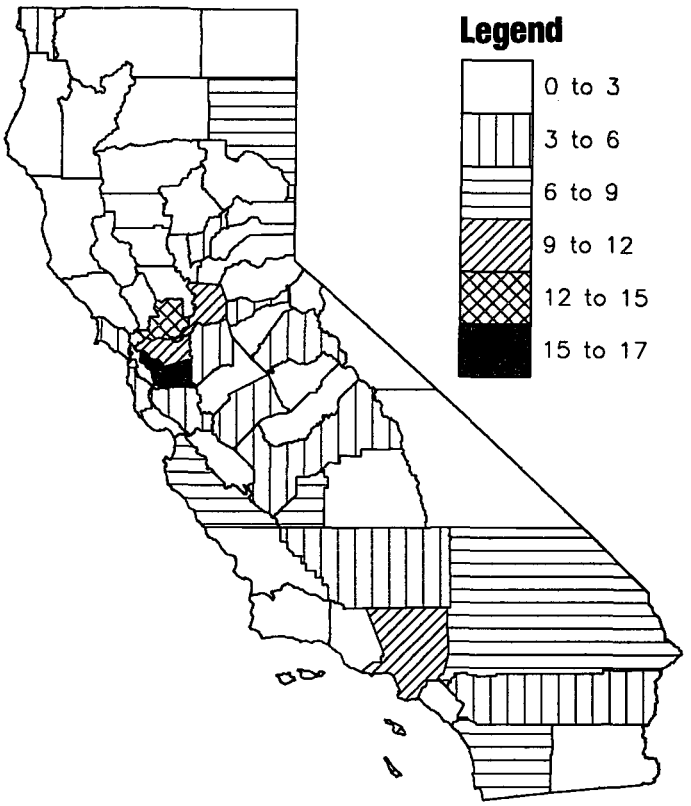
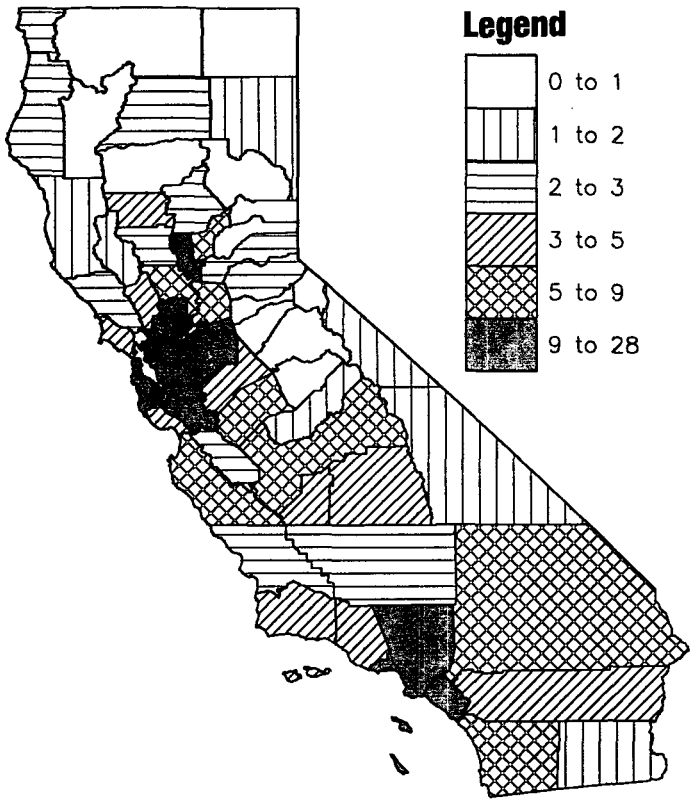
California's Black Population

Percent by county, 1990



California's Asian Population

Percent by county, 1990



Francisco and San Diego, the fastest growing areas of the state were actually outside those cities. This suggests whites were continuing to move to the suburbs.

One reason for the exodus was the search for affordable and available housing, which pushed many families to distant locales, some of which where not even incorporated cities a decade ago.

The growth in these regions has been anticipated, according to Ken Wachter, a UC Berkeley professor of demographics. "Remember, the population of California has increased enormously and by the highest percent of any large state," said Wachter. "It has to go somewhere."

That "somewhere" shows up in places like Santa Clarita, a city located about 45 miles north of Los Angeles along Interstate 5, which grew by more than 60 percent in the decade — from 66,000 to 110,000. It is now about the same size as Berkeley or Pasadena. The majority of its residents commute to Los Angeles, according to Dave Hogan, the city's assistant planner.

"In the 1980s [our housing costs] were generally significantly cheaper," Hogan said. "We were probably 15 to 20 percent cheaper, which, when you're looking at multi-hundred thousand dollar houses, is a significant amount of money. However, our housing costs have caught up and are closer to the median."

In 1985 the average housing cost in the Los Angeles area was $125,160, according to Lotus Lou of the California Association of Realtors. This information was self-reported and did not include some high-priced areas such as Beverly Hills or Palos Verdes Estates. Lou could not speculate if the figure would be higher or lower if all cities in Los Angeles County were included.

Palmdale, a city by Edwards Air Force Base and some 30 miles east of Santa Clarita, exploded from 12,000 to just under 70,000 in that same period — an increase of more than five fold.

Entire counties also increased substantially.

"Riverside County grew 76 percent. That's an astounding amount," said Quinn. Already the state's seventh largest county, Riverside currently has one-and-a-half congressional representatives, sharing one with San Bernardino County. Quinn said Riverside alone should pick up one of the state's projected seven new representatives.

As Los Angles and other older urban centers cope with housing demands by building more multi-family housing units like apartments, families who want their own houses are forced to look elsewhere.

"That's why you see northern San Diego County and Riverside and San Bernardino growing so much," said John Malson, research manager with the state Department of Finance demographics unit. "Most of their growth is from Los Angeles, Orange County and the coastal communities."

In the San Francisco Bay area, Hercules, a city once known for producing dynamite, exploded by 182 percent in the 1980s as home prices skyrocketed in more established communities. For awhile, the dynamite production discouraged residential building, "but when they decided to get rid of the commerce, they had all that land around it," Malson said.

A telephone survey conducted last December showed that more than half of the employed residents in Hercules commute to San Francisco, Oakland, Berkeley or other sections of Alameda County and San Mateo County, according to Connie Jackson, assistant to city manager of Hercules.

Demographers expect inland cities to continue to grow

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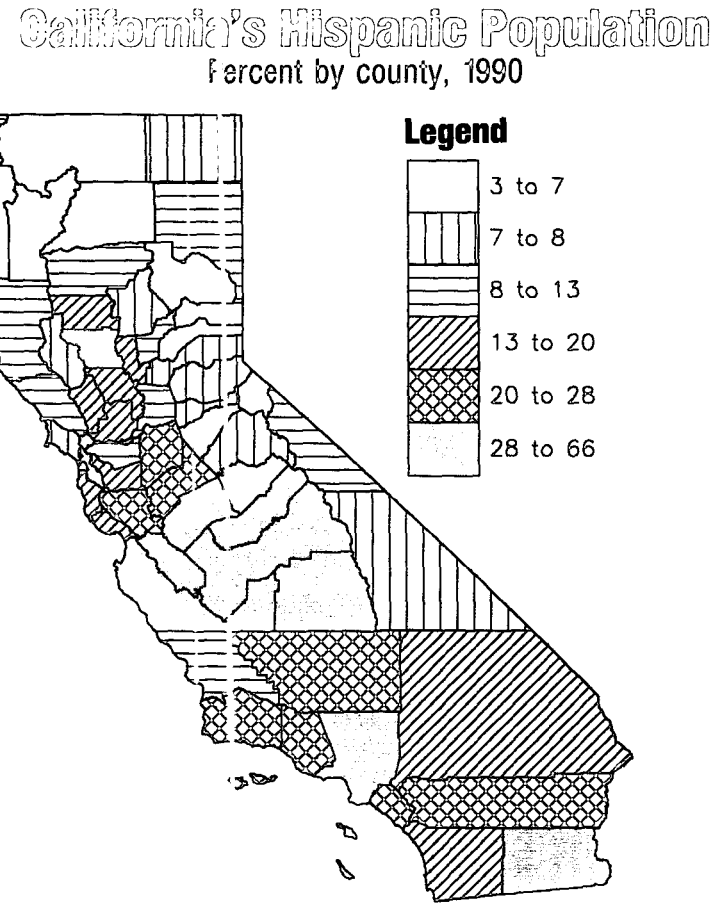

because of the cheaper housing and available land. Coastal cities, on the other hand, are limited by resources and space.

Long Beach; currently the fifth largest city in California at 429,000, managed to grow in the decade by building high-rise apartments, Malson said. But other problems such as freeway traffic will control the population.

"I've been to Long Beach, if they pack any more people, those highways will be impossible," Malson said.

As a result, Sacramento and Fresno — the seventh and eighth largest cities, respectively — soon should surpass Oakland and Long Beach. Oakland has some areas within its city limits which can be developed — vacant lots, for example — but it is mostly built out, according to Brook Levin, a policy analyst with the Oakland mayor's office. It is also locked in by other developed cities and by the Bay.

Riverside and perhaps Bakersfield will soon pass Anaheim and Santa Ana, the largest cities in Orange County. A burgeoning region a decade ago, its home prices and congestion rival Los Angeles. San Diego passed Orange as the second most-populous county in the state in this census and "is still growing faster," Malson said.

Bakersfield may be the newest developing urban center (or metropolitan-statistical area) although it may be limited by its economy, which revolves primarily around ranching and oil.

"As long as the industries that are attracting people in the first place are healthy, they will continue to grow," Malson said. "If they can become a diverse economy, they will grow unabated. Oil is kind of tenuous." In the past, San Jose's economy, for example, was hurt when the electronics

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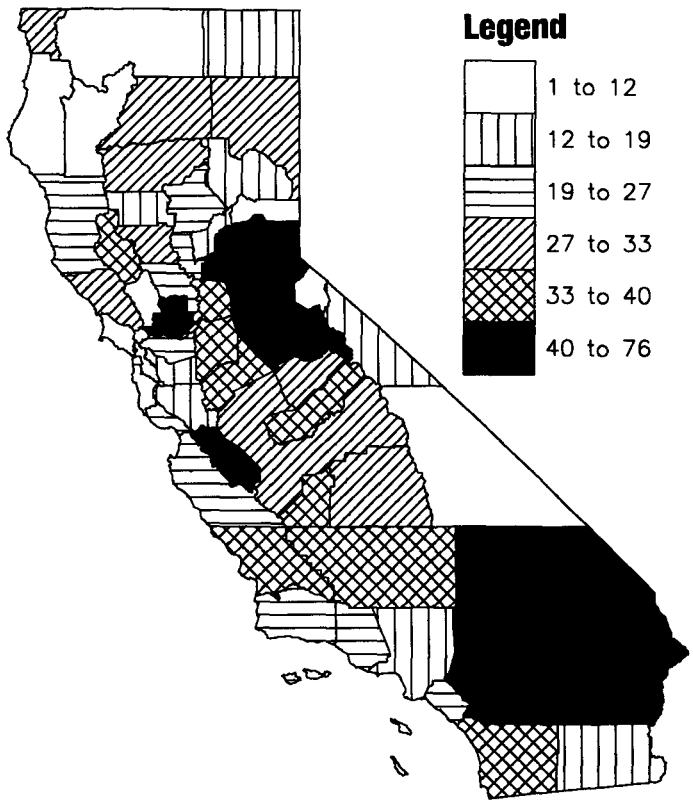
California Population Growth

Percent increase in population 1980 to 1990



industry suffered.

In the northern part of the state, San Jose and San Francisco, the third and fourth largest cities, should continue to hold those rankings, but they are headed in opposite directions.

San Francisco, a seven-mile by seven-mile peninsula, has kept its population between 680,000 and 750,000, Malson said. "It tends to attract a lot of the new immigrants to California. They get acclimated to California and then move. You see the population explode once in awhile, and then decline."

San Jose, on the other hand, still has room to grow. "They have a large amount of undeveloped land. They have industry and markets which will continue to attract people," he said.

Wachter pointed out that population increases can sometimes be misleading. "Some of this is just where you draw the lines, what you define as the metropolitan area. In a sense, San Francisco-San Jose-Oakland is one area that compares to L.A."

Sacramento residents voted on a measure last November that would have consolidated most of Sacramento County into one city with a population of more than one million, instantly making the capital the state's third largest city. The local proposition was defeated, however.

Indeed, some of Santa Clarita's growth resulted from merging the cities of Newhall, Valencia, Saugus and Canyon Country in the late 1980s.

California will continue to grow, but not at the explosive rate of the 1980s, Wachter added. "Housing has dropped dramatically. That's one indicator that ... it's not going to be as intense as it has been."

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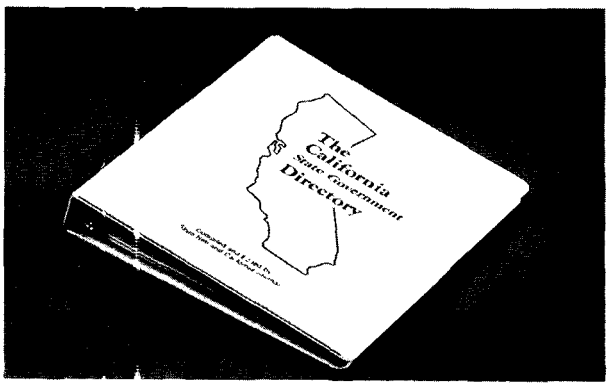

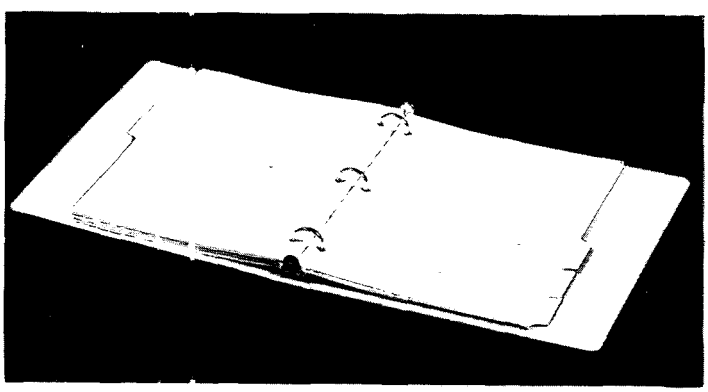

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WASHINGTON PERSPECTIVE

By LARRY LIEBERT

The Keating One

February 27th was a day for patriotism and celebration, as President George Bush announced the cease-fire in the United States' triumphant campaign to force Iraq from Kuwait. For the more reflective, it might also have been a day for thoughts about global power and responsibility.

It was not by any means a day when America had much time to ponder the ethics of Congress or the implications of the clubby Senate's difficulties in punishing its own wayward members.

AND THAT MAY BE EXACTLY WHY the Senate Ethics Committee chose February 27th to issue, at long last, its preliminary verdict in the case of the "Keating Five." The cries of "whitewash" from Common Cause and other political reform groups were barely heard amid the postwar victory whoops that filled the airwaves and crowded the front pages of newspapers all over the country.

The committee merely issued mildly critical findings for four of the five senators who had intervened with regulators on behalf of Lincoln Savings tycoon Charles Keating Jr., one of their most generous political patrons. In the cases of Democratic Senators Donald Riegle of Michigan and Dennis DeConcini of Arizona, the committee concluded that their "conduct gave the appearance of being improper and was certainly attended with insensitivity and poor judgment" but "did not reach a level requiring institutional action."

In the cases of Democrat John Glenn of Ohio and sole Republican John McCain of Arizona — the ex-hero astronaut and ex-hero prisoner of war, respectively — the committee found merely that they "exercised poor judgment" in isolated circumstances.

That left Alan Cranston, the California Democrat who might now be remembered as "the Keating One." The committee voted to proceed to a final-stage investigation, suggesting it intended to seek a censure of Cranston by the full Senate.

What made Cranston's behavior so much worse than that of his colleagues? The wordy committee report said it found "substantial credible evidence that provides substantial cause for the committee to conclude, based upon the totality of the circumstances ... that Senator Cranston engaged in an impermissible pattern of conduct in which fund raising and official activities were substantially linked."

Over two years, the committee said, Cranston and his staff contacted regulators regularly on Keating's behalf. "On at least four occasions," it found, "these contacts were made in close connection with the solicitation or receipt of contributions" totaling close to $1 million for voter registration groups backed by Cranston.

It also criticized Cranston's use of political fund-raiser Joy Jacobson who "repeatedly scheduled and attended meetings between Senator Cranston and contributors in which legislative or regulatory issues were discussed."

Confronted by this harsh judgment, Cranston did not simply repeat his insistence of his own innocence. Instead, he mounted a last-ditch effort to portray the other members of the Keating Five as deserving at least as much condemnation as he had reaped. "It's clear that I have been unfairly singled out despite the evidence in all five cases," said Cranston.

Even before the committee's decision was announced, Cranston had bitterly denounced leaked reports that he could be the one member of the "Keating Five" to face Senate discipline.

"Am I the logical scapegoat," he asked in a letter to the committee, "because I have been ill, and because I am the only one who will not seek re-election, and any damage done to me personally will not affect the balance of political power in the Senate between Democrats and Republicans?"

Cranston was hardly alone in suggesting the committee was swayed by politics in meting out punishment. (Republicans on the committee were reportedly determined to let McCain off the hook completely, and Democrats were said to be just as determined to hand down some criticism of him.) And Cranston was hardly alone in implying that the other senators were let off easy.

DeConcini was at least as insistent as Cranston in pressing regulators to go easy on Keating, and several of his closest political associates had lucrative business dealings with the Arizona-based entrepreneur, who now faces criminal charges. There was evidence that Riegle repeatedly misstated his level of involvement with Keating, but the committee found "no deliberate intent to deceive." And McCain accepted vacation plane flights from Keating, who was a business partner of the senator's wife, but the committee shrugged that it had no "jurisdiction" over those matters because they happened back when McCain was in the House of Representatives.

Nonetheless, there was ample evidence that Cranston stood in a class by himself when it came to advocating Keating's cause and collecting rewards within hours or days of doing so. After all, Cranston and the voter registration drives led by his son Kim raked in the bulk of the $1.5 million that Keating raised for all five senators.

REPUBLICAN SENATOR WARREN RUDMAN of New Hampshire, vice chairman of the ethics committee, told reporters, "I suggest that you read the bill of particulars [on] Senator Cranston very carefully. Then read all of the evidence in the other four cases and ask yourself this question: Could you draw any bill of particulars that would be similar to the Cranston bill of particulars in any of the other four? ... We came up with the answer, that the answer was 'no.'"

Considering these grim political events, the Senate proved its ability to leave much unsaid on March 5th, when it welcomed Cranston back from his combat with cancer.

Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell of Maine assured Cranston that "he has our affection and our good wishes." Cranston, appearing cheery and well, replied that he was delighted to be back to "full, active duty in the Senate."

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